ARMATA:

A

FRAGMENT.



LONDON:

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INTRODUCTION.

When Galilæo discovered the phases of Venus through his telescope, he was cast into prison by the tribunal of the Inquisition.—He was cast into prison, as Milton in his Areopagitica has well described it, only for differing in astronomy from the Franciscan and Dominican monks.—Imperfect as the state of science was in the age of that great philosopher, it was nevertheless believed to be at its fullest maturity, and it has always been so considered from Noah's flood to the present hour; the pride of man will scarcely enable him to accept the most manifest evidence of his senses, when brought into collision with the most manifest errors which time has sanctioned; and until ignorance shall be fairly pushed from her stool by the main force of truth, she will continue

to sit staring like an idiot, worshipping the shapeless phantoms of her own blind creation. This is so universally true, that even in this æra of comparative light, I expect, *for a season at least*, to find but little credit for my discovery of a New Land, because I cannot lay down its position on any accredited map; geographers having decided and certainly *almost* supported by the fact, that we know as perfectly every spot of *considerable magnitude* upon the earth, as I can now see the dots over the i's whilst I am writing. When on my return therefore to England, I first mentioned my discovery of a New Island, connected too with continents of immense extent, I was immediately asked, in a mixed tone of confidence and derision, in what latitudes and longitudes they were all placed?—If I had answered at once, without preface or explanation, that they were in *no* latitudes or longitudes, being as I conceived no parts of the earth's surface, I admit that I might have been fairly set down as a lunatic or an impostor, because

truth,

truth, when it breaks in too suddenly, confounds the understanding, as vision is overpowered by a sudden burst of light. I thought it best therefore for the moment to practise an evasion, and answered, as the truth indeed was, that I had been obliged to commit myself to the waves from a sinking vessel; that there being more brass than wood on my quadrant, I could not venture to use it as a raft to save me; and that if I had hung my time-piece round my neck, I should from its weight have only discovered the longitude of the bottom. Well, then, said a profound philosopher, waving for the present all localities, let us know something at least of this famous Terra Incognita.—No, Sir, I replied, you will soon, I believe, be looking for it through your telescope. I resolved, in short, to shut myself up in silence until I addressed myself, as I now do, to the whole public of this great country, and through that public to the whole civilized world.

CHAPTER I.

In which the Author gives an Account of his outward Voyage and Shipwreck.

I SAILED from New York on the 6th of September, 1814, in the good ship Columbia, which never returned to any part of the United States, nor, until this publication, was ever heard of in any kingdom of the world. We were bound to China by the way of New South Wales, and as our voyage for nearly three months was prosperous and without unusual accident, I pass it by altogether.—On the 10th of February a storm arose, which soon increasing to a hurricane, accompanied with the most tremendous thunder and lightning, our ship, by the pressure of the one and the stroke of the other, became in a few hours an unmanageable wreck, her rudder being torn away, and her masts levelled with the decks. For nearly a month from that period a journal would be dismal

dismal and uninteresting, as we drifted with every change of wind or current over a trackless ocean; except that astronomy having been rather a passion than a study from my earliest youth, I carefully noted every day at noon, by my quadrant and time-piece, our forlorn position; a precaution which I shall always consider as the most fortunate circumstance of my life. The particulars, however, are omitted: a seaman's log-book would, I suppose, have but an indifferent sale in Bond Street.

On the 16th of March, after full day had risen upon us, we found ourselves as it were overtaken by a second night.—The sea was convulsed into whirlpools all around us, by the obstruction of innumerable rocks, and we were soon afterwards hurried on by a current, in no way resembling any which navigators have recorded. We felt its influence under the shadow of a dark cloud, between two tremendous precipices overhanging and seemingly almost closing up the entrance which received us. Its

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impetuosity was three times greater, at the least, than even the Rapids above the American Niagara, so that nothing but its almost incredible smoothness could have prevented our ship, though of five hundred tons burthen, from being swept by it under water, as our velocity could not be less, at the lowest computation, than twenty-five or rather thirty miles an hour. The stream appeared evidently to owe its rapidity to compression, though not wholly to the compression of land, its boundary on one side, if boundary it ought to be called, appearing rather like Chaos and Old Night; and what was most striking and extraordinary, we could see from the deck, not above two ships' length from us, another current running with equal force in the opposite direction, but separated from our's by pointed rocks, which appeared all along above the surface, with breakers dashing over them. Neither of the channels, as far as my eye could estimate their extent, were above fifty yards wide, nor at a greater distance from each other, and they were so even in their directions, that

we went forward like an arrow from a bow, without the smallest deviation towards the rocks on one side, or the dreary obscurity on the other.

In this manner we were carried on, without the smallest traceable variation, till the 18th of June, a period of three months and two days, in which time, if my above-stated calculation of our progress be any thing like correct, and I am sure I do not over-rate it, we must have gone straight onward above seventy thousand miles, a space nearly three times the circumference of the earth. On the evening of that day which was to become memorable by the triumphant termination of the immortal battle of Waterloo, and which on my account also, though without any merit of mine, will be a new æra in the history of the world, we found ourselves suddenly emerging into a wide sea as smooth as glass—the heavens above twinkling with stars, some of which I had never seen before, and some of our own constellations, which were visible, shone out with increased lustre, though still not subtending any angle to

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the naked sight,* while others of our hemisphere appeared more distant, and some I missed altogether; but the moon, full orbed, was by far the most striking object, appearing more than double her size with us, and her light, though borrowed, proportionally resplendent.

I shall not attempt to describe my astonishment at this sublime and hitherto super-human spectacle, because having been in all latitudes, and being, as I have already said, familiar with astronomy in its abstrusest branches, I was now fully convinced, not only that I was in no part of the world ever visited before, but that there was something else belonging to the world itself never even known or imagined. I am well aware that the figure and extent of our planet can neither be denied nor doubted; the moon, whilst I am writing, is just touching the sun's vertical disk within a second of calculated time, and moving onward to predicted eclipse; and in my voyage homewards, I saw the moon at

* I found afterwards that no parallax could be obtained by the largest telescopes.

the foretold moment wading into the earth's shadow, and at last totally obscured.—The revolutions round our axis and in our orbit mock in their precision the most celebrated inventions by which the astonishing art of man has contrived to measure even their shortest periods; and as the fixed stars, from wherever seen upon our earth, must be uniformly visible in the same positions and magnitudes, I could account, *at the moment*, in no other way for the position of the ocean in which I now found myself, than by supposing we had a ring like Saturn, which, by reason of our atmosphere, could not be seen at such an immense distance, and which was accessible only by a channel so narrow and so guarded by surrounding rocks and whirlpools, that even the vagrancy of modern navigators had never before fallen in with it, they having always hitherto been sent back, like other vagrants, to their original settlements. An unsurmountable objection, however, after a little attention, soon opposed itself to the theory of this sea being on such a ring; because, though from

from its distance it might not be visible through our atmosphere, yet, as it must occasionally intercept the sun's body in the earth's diurnal revolutions, its existence must always have been palpable. The phenomenon therefore may, perhaps, be better accounted for, by supposing that the channel I had passed connected our earth and its counterpart which had just received me, like the chain of a double-headed shot, both of which might revolve around the sun together, and the moon around both, the interjacent channel revolving along with them.—There is nothing in this hypothesis at all inconsistent with the Newtonian system, which, standing upon the basis of mathematical truth, cannot be shaken in the mind of any reasonable being; but this channel may exist in perfect harmony with it; indeed it is no more inconsistent with the round figure of the earth to have such an appendage protruded from it, than it is unnatural for cows and horses, or other round animals, to have tails; or, to come closer to the subject, than that comets should have them, which are now believed

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to be opaque bodies like our own; but the best way after all, out of these and all other difficulties, is to hark back to the fact.—I am not in the least anxious to be the author of any new theory of the earth, nor to rival the justly celebrated Herschel in the discovery of other worlds, but I am conscious of my own integrity, and cannot doubt the evidence of my senses.—If this sea, therefore, and the country whose shores it washes beyond it, and which I afterwards visited, can be considered as part of our earth, let them, in God's name, be so considered—and if they cannot, then let philosophy and fancy go each their own way to find places for them: I shall stand perfectly neuter in the controversy.—It is enough for me that I possess the celestial observations taken as we entered the jaws of the current, and as we escaped from its dominion; these fortunate precautions enabled me to return to England, and could at pleasure lead me back again; but the discovery no man can expect from me without a corresponding compensation.—If ten thousand pounds were given to

Harrison

Harrison for a time-piece not now in use, being long ago left in the shade by the still advancing light of British genius, and which after all was only tried in a voyage to Barbadoes—what reward may not honestly be demanded for leading the way to regions never heard of, nor conceived in the most romantic fancy, placed for ages beyond mortal ken, and opening, as the reader will see hereafter, to the discovery of a nation as highly civilized as our own, though differing from it almost throughout in all the distinguishing characteristics of mankind? I am well aware, however, that until my veracity shall be established by the Board of Admiralty, doubts may remain in the minds of some as to the authority of this history, yet as far as it has advanced hitherto, there is surely nothing in the least incredible.—Even thirty years ago, a man would not have received more immediate credit who had proposed to produce, at his pleasure and at any distances, the explosions of celestial fire; or to rise above the clouds, and pass the channel which divides us from the

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Continent, in a globe of oiled silk; or who should have staked a large sum to rival even British navigation, by impelling a vessel with condensed steam against the winds and tides.—As little would any man have then ventured into a coal-pit, upon the trust that the same means employed as a hydraulic engine would clear it of the torrents rushing in every direction through the bowels of the earth; and least of all, that he could safely contend there against the most mortal elements of the subterranean world, by having the magic lantern of Davy by his side.

But before I leave for ever this imaginary obstacle to the reception of my adventures, it may be as well to give a decisive answer at once to sceptical readers of every description, upon reasons more within general reach than the principles of philosophy or mathematics. It is not known to the multitude that the earth is held in her place by the attraction of the sun, but all the world knows that every man is attracted by his own interests.—If I

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had written a romance and not a real history; I must be a lunatic not to blazon it in the largest characters even in the title-page of my work.—No human stupidity or folly ever failed so far in the composition of a novel as to defeat its popularity to the extent of at least two editions, which the circulating libraries of themselves take off, without the sale of a single volume to the collectors of books; whereas no human learning or wisdom employed upon realities can now-a-days look much farther than to an indemnity for the paper and the types.—High reputation, indeed, (a rare phenomenon!) with the aids of hot-pressed foolscap, a broad margin and expensive engravings, may force a passage for history through the libraries of the great, but *Novels* alone are the books of universal sale.—The only actual historians are the Editors of Newspapers, and bankruptcy would soon overtake even their most favoured proprietors, if they were fettered in their columns by truth. This most useful class of men are therefore shamefully calumniated for their occasional

deviations from it.—Printing, in a free country, is surely a lawful trade; and when a man opens a shop, he must of course fill it with such wares as are saleable.—He is not to *set* the fashions, but to maintain his family by *following* them. The road therefore was plain before me. The discovery of new lands had often been made the vehicle of romance or satire—witness the voyages of Panurge, Gulliver, and Sinbad the Sailor; nor would the resort to such a fiction have been plagiary when the objects were so different, as mine will be found to be.—The foreign voyage or travel is in these cases only as the bolus, in which a medicine for the mind is to be administered; and an author could no more be considered even as an imitator by resorting to a romance, though so familiar, than Dr. James's patent could have been set aside for the invention of his celebrated powders, if his specification had directed them to be swallowed in the common wafers of the shop: what possible motive, then, could I have had for imposing upon the public an invention as a reality,

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since it could operate only against myself? Perhaps, therefore, in a few years hence, when packets are continually passing and repassing between the twin worlds; and when the gazettes and pamphlets of the country I am about to describe are lying upon our tables, though this volume must then cease to be interesting, its author may be remembered, and his memory respected.

The placid ocean on which we were now launched continued but a short time pacific. We were soon overtaken by a second storm, too like the former we had encountered, the shock of which, from the shattered condition of our vessel, it was impossible to sustain. I shall not weary the reader, according to custom, with any detailed account of our shipwreck.—If the sunken rock we struck upon had been within the reach of any one who shall read this history, I should have pointed out its position, but that not being the case, at least for the present, and as there can be neither improvement nor delight

in dwelling on the agonies of despair and death, I purposely pass over every circumstance which occurred from the striking of the vessel until I jumped into the sea and drifted upon a plank within a short distance of the shore. From that time I became insensible, and can therefore give no account of the almost miraculous manner in which I must have been saved, as not another soul out of one hundred and forty-eight, of which our crew consisted, were ever seen again, except floating lifeless amidst the waves or dashing against the rocks of a lofty and dangerous coast.

CHAP-

CHAPTER II.

In which the Author relates his extraordinary and unexpected Reception.

ON recovering my senses, I found myself stretched nearly naked upon a rock, with the spray of the sea dashing over me, surrounded by an immense number of people whose speech was utterly unknown to me, a circumstance which added to my alarm, because my astronomical theorems being altogether obliterated through terror, and being well acquainted with the languages of most civilized nations, I concluded I had been cast amongst a savage people, from whom I could expect neither sympathy nor protection.—How then shall I attempt to describe my sensations upon seeing a person for whom every body made way upon his approach—whose dignified appearance marked him to be of a superior order to the rest, and who, upon hearing my bitter lamentations, addressed

addressed me in the purest English, saying in accents the sweetest and most impressive, "Unhappy stranger, fear nothing!—The benevolence of God extends over all his works, however divided for mysterious causes in the abyss of infinite space.—Even in this unknown and distant world He has preserved a man of your own country to comfort and protect you." However impatient the reader must naturally be that I should advance without digression in a narrative so very extraordinary, yet I must pause here for a moment. It is the office of history not only to amuse but to instruct; to make men not only wiser, but better—to reconcile them to their various conditions, however clouded or disastrous—to impress them with a constant sense of the Divine Providence and presence—or, to describe it by almost a word in the sublime language of our great poet,

"To justify the ways of God to men."

The first reflection, therefore, which the reader ought to make upon this extraordinary

deliverance from death, and the sudden transition from absolute despair to comfort and happiness, is already made for him in the encouraging language of my protector; and I am persuaded, besides, that no person, however unfortunate, can look back upon his own life, without having to remember with gratitude and devotion many singular and auspicious conjunctures which no skill or merit of his own could have contrived; with many escapes from the natural consequences of his own misconduct, or from accidents which cross us even in our most guarded and virtuous paths; and who has not felt, in the changes from sickness to health, from pain to pleasure, from danger to security, and from depression to joy and exultation, a fuller and a higher satisfaction (independently of the uses of such reverses) than could have arisen from the uninterrupted continuance of the most prosperous condition.

As there must be light and shade in every picture, so there must be perpetual changes to

make

make human life delightful. Nothing must stand still: the sea would be a putrid mass if it were not vexed by its tides, which, even with the moon to raise them, would languish in their course, if not whirled round and round those tortuous promontories which are foolishly considered to be the remnants of a ruined world.—Marks, as they undoubtedly are, of many unknown revolutions; the earth probably never was nor ever can be more perfect than it is.—It would have been a tame and tiresome habitation if it had been as smooth as the globes with which we describe our stations on its surface. Its unfathomable and pathless oceans—its vast lakes cast up by volcanic fire, and its tremendous mountains contending with the clouds, are not only sources of the most picturesque and majestic beauties, but lift up the mind to the sublime contemplation of the God who gave them birth.

CHAPTER III.

In which the Author became convinced that he was no longer upon the Earth.

HAVING been removed from the shore in a kind of vehicle most admirably constructed for the purpose, and laid upon a couch, which my generous protector had prepared for me, the most intense curiosity now succeeded to the pain and horror which had oppressed me, and I entreated him to relate the miraculous events which could alone have brought us together, desiring him, however, in the first place, to relieve those anxieties which the sight of a person from England could not but have excited.—"Alas!" said my protector, with great emotion, "I have no anxieties connected with England, nor with the world of which it is a part.—My parents were cast upon this shore when I was an infant of only three years old; they were, as I have learned from my father, in the course of a voyage to the East Indies:

Indies: but the vessel having been separated from the rest of the fleet in a dreadful tempest, and having, like your own, from the loss of her masts and rudder, been long the sport of distracting winds and currents, she was wrecked at last, with the whole of her crew—my father and mother, and five others only excepted, all of whom have since been called away to a better world. As for myself, my death, from the helplessness of infancy, must have been inevitable, but for a dog (long since dead) which my father had brought with him from the Labrador coast, who followed me it seems amongst the breakers when the ship overset, and never quitted me until he brought me to the shore. Alas! poor ———*, how much is the short span of your wise and faithful species to be lamented!

"From my parents I learned the English language, but little or nothing of England itself or of its history; as both of them died before I was of an age to take any interest in such sub-

* The name of this famous dog I have forgotten.

jects; and those who were saved with us, were not only obscure and ignorant persons, but were soon scattered abroad, according to their accidental fortunes, in an unknown land, and by the course of nature must long since have been in their graves."

"But *your own* history," I said, "must be infinitely interesting." "To a stranger, like yourself," answered my kind protector, "cast not only upon a foreign shore, but upon a new and unheard of world, any account of the most illustrious individual, much more of myself, would be tiresome and uninstructive. Your courtesy only can ask for it now. My name is Morven—my family most ancient and respectable in Scotland, though not noble—that is all I have now to say concerning myself.—It is enough for the present, that I have arrived at such a rank and station as to afford you the means of seeing to the greatest advantage a country which, much as my parents used constantly to exalt my own in my infant fancy, cannot, I think, be inferior to it. Though placed as it were a kind of exile, in a remote

margin

margin of this world,—small in its compass,—in its climate disappointing from its vicissitudes,—surrounded by seas not often favourable to navigation, and only emerging from the darkness of barbarism in a late period of nations, it soon towered above them all, and has for a long season been the day-star of our planet.—It seems, indeed, as if the Divine Providence had chosen it as the instrument of its benevolent purpose, to enlighten by an almost insensible progression the distant and divided families of mankind, to hold up to them the sacred lamp of religious and moral truth, to harmonise them by the example of mild and liberal institutions, and to controul the disturbers of the social world with an unparalleled arm of strength;—may she always remember that this mighty dominion is a trust—that her work is not yet finished—and that if she deserts or slumbers upon her post, she will be relieved and punished!"

I availed myself of the pause which seemed to finish his preface to what he evidently con-

sidered as a distinct world from our own, by asking his father's opinion upon that momentous subject, as I could not compose my mind to attend to any thing until I was satisfied as to my real situation. "My father," answered my friend, "undoubtedly considered that he was cast forth and for ever from the earth. He used often to say so, but his reasons I can only give you from his Journal, which I have carefully preserved, being too young myself to comprehend them. The book is in this very chamber, and I can turn in a moment to that remarkable part of it." Having besought him to do so, he put the volume into my hand, where, after describing in the English language the extraordinary channel nearly as I have already described it, I found the following short sentence quite conclusive of an opinion which but too clearly confirmed my own.

"*When I consider the unexampled rapidity of the current, with its dismal chaotic boundary, and that we were involved in it for almost three*

months,

months, emerging at once into a sea where the heavens above presented new stars, and those of our own in different magnitudes and positions than any they could be seen in from either of our hemispheres, I am convinced, beyond a doubt, that I am no longer upon the earth, but on what I might best describe as a twin brother with it, bound together by this extraordinary channel, as a kind of umbilical chord, in the capacious womb of nature, but which, instead of being separated in the birth, became a new and permanent substance in her mysterious course."

The reader will no doubt observe, that this theory exactly corresponds with my own, though more fancifully expressed than by my vulgar simile of a double-headed shot, and I have little doubt that this new and interesting planet will, in all our almanacks, be styled Gemini hereafter, though it is called Deucalia by its inhabitants.

I cannot describe my feelings upon this awful con-

confirmation of such a tremendous exile, and entreated to be informed whether any thing appeared in the Journal that seemed to favour an opinion, that the earth might be regained by pursuing the contrary course. "Undoubtedly," said my friend, and he turned in a few moments to the following passage:

"*The equal rapidity of the two contrary currents, and the impenetrable division between them, convinces me that a vessel in the mouth of the other, at the point from which we emerged from the one we had been involved in, would re-conduct us to the earth; but having taken no precautions to ascertain its position, guarded besides by natural obstacles of the most dangerous and perplexing character, I can indulge no hope of either re-visiting our world myself, or of making it a rational object of future discovery.*"

I leaped with joy when I had finished this sentence, notwithstanding its disheartening conclusion, and said to my protector, "You may

now

now go on with your history; I burn with impatience to hear it—I have no fears for the future—your father's apprehensions were well founded, but they have no application to me. He had not employed the means without which no seaman, even in our own seas, could ever return to his country; but fortunately I was more provident and skilful—I know within a gun-shot where the current began and ended, and could find out both to-morrow; but the time is not yet arrived for it.—My adventure is too important to be thrown away, and indeed if my passage back again were as short as from England to France, I should with the utmost reluctance undertake it, as it might separate me for ever from so kind and generous a friend—proceed then with the fullest account of the world that has received me—I am all attention."

"Such a narrative," said the friendly Morven, "even if I were qualified to enter upon it, would be of no value to the inhabitant of another world; it could only gratify a curiosity which your

mind

mind is not sufficiently at rest to enjoy.—When you have acquired the language of this country, it will then be as open to you as to myself, and the best service I can now render you, is to direct your course; lest, after burying yourself beneath the thousands of volumes which under my roof will be at your command, hereafter, you might find yourself but little wiser than when you began. Useful history lies within a narrow compass, and all I shall attempt for the present will be to give you such a bird's-eye view of the renowned and powerful Island of Armata, as will best enable you to pursue your own inquiries.—When you have the structure faithfully delineated, you will find your own way through its various apartments, and examine their contents as your particular taste and judgment may direct you."

I could not help here interrupting my friend, much as impatience was on the stretch, by remarking that the name of Armata was most appropriate, having been just wrecked in full sight

sight of an immense naval arsenal, where ships of the largest classes were constructing, surrounded again by a mole crowded with a most formidable navy, whilst on the sloping banks of the fortress, by which the whole was encompassed and guarded, large bodies of troops, apparently in the highest state of discipline, were encamped and hutted. The name of Armata, I therefore repeated, was most appropriate. "And why on that account?" said my friend, plainly not understanding me; a question which brought back at once to my recollection, that Rome could not possibly have been the godmother to this Island, her language of course being utterly unknown: but such is the magic power of association, even when reason has dissolved the spell.

"The name of Armata," he continued, "has nothing at all to do with forces naval or military, but is supposed to have arisen from the extraordinary charms of our women; Armata being, in the fabulous mythologies of our remote

remote ages, the deity representing and presiding over female beauty." Here, as the reader will find in the sequel, the appropriation was indeed most perfect; but it must be left to every reader, according to his own fancy, to form an idea of the Armatian women; because not having any distinct characters of form or countenance, like those of France, or Spain, or Italy, or Greece, or Circassia, but embracing them all in their delightful varieties, the poet must drop his pen, and the painter his pencil:—but I must no longer delay your attention to the history you ask for.*

* On my return to England, and whilst I was writing these pages, I was very much surprized to observe in my pocket edition of Johnson's Spelling Dictionary, that our Venus also went by the name of Armata. I had never heard it before, and only found it in an index to this little volume. It passes all understanding how such a coincidence should have arisen.

CHAP-

CHAPTER IV.

In which Morven begins his Account of the Island of Armata.

"As there can be little doubt that this planet, like our own, was peopled from two human beings, and as from what remains of my father's writings, they seem strongly to resemble each other in all the characteristics of the species, there is probably a great similarity in their remote histories.—Primitive man is nearly the same every where, except as accidental circumstances have had their influence.—In climates soft and enervating, the inhabitants have often been for ages stationary, and the robuster nations have been their conquerors. With us, indeed, they have repeatedly changed the face of things —multitudes expelling multitudes, like the waves of the sea, sweeping away yet mixing with one another, but still preserving throughout all their changes the distinct and original character of one people. The governments of mankind in

the first ages must of course have been patriarchal, their numbers being small, and few occasions for contention in an unpeopled world; but, in process of time, when tribes, or rather large masses came to be in perpetual motion towards other countries, they often found them pre-occupied; and then, as the sparks fly upwards, the æra commenced of strife and warfare. This new state of a wandering population gave a corresponding character to their societies, which though barbarous, or at least rude, in the outset, became the accidental source in this favoured island of the most powerful dominion, and the perfection of civil wisdom. This may appear to be carrying you farther back than any human annals need be traced upwards, but the characters and destinies of nations are so often dependent upon one another, that it is difficult, if not impossible, to give an enlightened or useful view of them, without almost an abridged history of a world; and however the ancient parts may appear insignificant from having no visible bearings upon their present conditions, they

they are sometimes, if not always, the sources of the varieties which distinguish them.

"It is on this account only that I must lead you by paths now neglected and almost forgotten, into the great road to the eventful period which embraces you as one of ourselves.

"The policy forced upon those numerous nations, as they were in their turns invaders or driven onwards by successive myriads, was a mixture of military command and civil magistracy.—With the sword continually in their hands, the service of it became the tenure of their possessions, and in a descending line from their leaders to the undistinguished multitude, they were held together by an indissoluble bond of union, giving law and protection to one another.

"It must be admitted that the governments I have been describing had a strong tendency towards arbitrary monarchies, an opinion con-

firmed by their histories; because, when one or more superior dominions had been established by conquest, the lesser ones surrounding them having no common interest to unite them, nor any support from the great bodies of their people, were often overpowered and extinguished: the most popular captains of fierce adventurers becoming in another age the sovereigns of nations.

"One of those invaders once swayed by force and terror the sceptre of Armata; but conquest and the tyrannical abuse of it may lay the foundation of a system of liberty which no courage could have conquered nor human wisdom have contrived.—Perhaps in this short sentence you have a faithful though as yet an obscure account of the origin of that singular constitution which has raised Armata to the highest pinnacle of fame and glory. Great and invulnerable as she now is, she was once subdued, and all the monuments of her ancient wisdom overthrown; but the dominion of one

man,

man, however gifted or fortunate, is sure to pass away when it tramples upon the principles that gave it birth.—The successful invader, confounding his free and fierce companions with the nation they had conquered, the oppressors soon became numbered with the oppressed, and after the reigns of but a few of his descendants, the successor to his arbitrary dominion was forced to submit to the establishment of freedom demanded in arms by the conquerors and the conquered now forming an unanimous and indignant people.

"The extraordinary feature of this singular revolution was, that a nation in arms against its sovereign and reducing him to terms of submission, had the discretion to know exactly what to demand, and, by demanding nothing more, to secure the privileges it had obtained.—The ordinary insurrections of mankind against oppression have generally been only convulsive paroxysms of tumult and disorder, more destructive than the tyranny overthrown, and often ending in worse;

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because civil societies cannot be suddenly new-modelled with safety.—Their improvements, to be permanent, must be almost insensible, and growing out of the original systems, however imperfect they may have been.

"The rude forefathers of this people had fortunately not then arrived at that state of political science which might perhaps have tempted them to a premature change of their government upon abstract principles—they looked only to their actual grievances.—They did not seek to abrogate the system which was the root of their ancient laws and institutions, but only to beat down usurpations, and to remedy defects.—They seem indeed to have discovered that there is a magnet in the civil as in the natural world to direct our course, though the latter was for ages afterwards unknown. The magnet of the civil world is a Representative Government, and at this auspicious period attracted like the natural one by iron, became fixed and immutable from the sword.

"The

"The consummate wisdom of those earliest reformers appears further in the public councils which they preserved.—From the most ancient times the people might be said to have had a protecting council in the government, but its jurisdiction was overborne.—They had only therefore to guard against the recurrence of that abuse, and as the power over the public purse had been the most destructive engine of their arbitrary sovereigns, they retained in their own hands by the most positive charters that palladium of independence, re-enacting them upon every invasion, aiming at nothing new, but securing what they had acquired.

"To have gone farther in improvement, *at that period*, would not only have been useless, but mischievous, even if the bulk of the people could have redeemed themselves by force from many intermediate oppressors; because, having most of all to fear from the power of their monarchs, the privileges of their superiors were indispensible supports; invested for many ages

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with the magistracies of the country, powerful in themselves from rank and property, having a common interest with the whole nation, *and no temptations being then in existence to seduce them from the discharge of their duties*, they were the most formidable opponents of the prerogatives that were to be balanced; and it was therefore the most unquestionable policy to enlarge and confirm their authority, instead of endeavouring to controul a long established and too powerful a dominion by an untried force.

" From this period the principles of civil freedom struck deep root in Armata, deeper perhaps from the weight by which they continued to be pressed, the prerogatives of their princes being still formidable and frequently abused.—Perhaps the law which governs the system of the universe may be the grand type and example of human governments—the immense power of the sun, though the fountain of light and life, would in its excess be fatal; the planets, therefore, though they yield to its fostering attraction

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in their unceasing and impetuous revolutions, are repelled from it by a kind of instinctive terror; since, if the sun could by its influence detach them from their force centrifugal, they would be absorbed with the swiftness of lightning into the centre, and, like the fly allured by the light of the taper, be instantly consumed.

"The powers given to executive governments for great national purposes, like those given to the sun, ought to be extensive, nor can they be dangerous if they are *sufficiently balanced*, and that balance preserved upon the very principle of *centrifugal* force; because the existence of a strong government, and the possibility of its misconduct, are the strongest securities of freedom. Every page of the history of Armata illustrates this important truth; since, in the same proportion that executive power has at different periods become the objects of salutary jealousy, popular privileges have been uniformly strengthened from the abuses, and when at last a grand and glorious struggle to put an

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end to them for ever was crowned with the justest and most triumphant success, constitutional fear, which had for ages watched over and subdued them, unhappily fell asleep—*the centrifugal force was lost*;—and power, stripped of its terrors, but invested with the means of *dazzling and corrupting*, soon began to undermine a system of government which the most formidable prerogatives had for ages been unable to destroy.

"The progress of this renowned people, from the period of their earliest struggles for liberty, to the final and, I trust, immortal consummation of their political constitution, was slow and eventful, but perhaps on that account the more secure: the safest road from an unsettled government, of any description, to one that is more perfect, being through those almost imperceptible changes by which the character and circumstances of a nation are changed. The Armatians, from their insular situation and enterprizing genius, were amongst the earliest

earliest though not the first explorers of distant and unknown countries; but their humanity and wisdom secured the advantages which the vices and follies of the original discoverers had cast away, and the dominion over new worlds (if I may so express myself) became their own. Their national government could not but be soon affected by this illustrious career: a commerce encircling our globe with riches in her train, advancing hand in hand with learning and science, which other causes were reviving, opposed by a silent and progressive force more efficacious than the sudden shock of a revolution, the oppressive pretensions of her nobles, and the firmest prerogatives of her kings,—to describe this momentous change in a word—the Armatians became a PEOPLE.

" It would be to you most uninteresting, and to me equally painful, to relate the conflicts of those antagonist powers for more than a hundred years, until the ancient monarchy and aristocracy, which for ages had supported each other, fell

fell to the ground in one ruin together; but as a river swoln and impetuous amidst the tempest, bursting beyond its banks and leaving no trace of its ancient channel, often returns to it, having only fructified the country it overflowed, so the Armatians soon came back again to the venerable but improved constitution of their fathers; they did spontaneous homage to their exiled monarch, and afterwards to his infatuated successor, till seeing no security in the mild and generous experiment of Restoration, they were driven at last to seek their safety through a revolution, but such a one as perhaps will to the end of time continue to be unexampled—accomplished without blood—cutting off only the cankered branches, but preserving all the others to hold their places in the ancient tree of their liberties: and as the broad leaf and consummate flower still preserve the distinct characters of the roots that nourish them, so the Armatians, even when principalities and powers were at their feet, never sought to depart from their original cast.

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" The ordinary occurrences of history producing no important changes, I have uniformly passed them over, and I am arrived therefore at a period within living memory, which will require your utmost attention.

CHAP-

CHAPTER V.

In which Morven continues his account of the Island of Armata.

"THIS highly favoured island now sat without a rival on this proud promontory in the centre of all the waters of this earth, with her mighty wings outspread to such a distance, that with your limited ideas of its numerous nations, it is impossible you should comprehend.—She was balanced upon her imperial throne by the equally vast and seemingly boundless continents on either side, bending alike beneath her sceptre, and pouring into her lap all that varieties of climate or the various characters of mankind could produce, whilst the interjacent ocean was bespangled with islands, which seem to be posted by nature as the watch-towers of her dominion, and the havens of her fleets.—Her fortune was equal to her virtues, and, in the justice of God, might be the fruit of it; since as the globe had expanded

expanded under her discoveries, she had touched it throughout as with a magic wand; the wilderness becoming the abodes of civilized man, adding new millions to her sovereignty, compared with which she was herself only like the seed falling upon the soil, the parent of the forest that enriches and adorns it.—She felt no wants, because she was the mother of plenty; and the free gifts of her sons at a distance, returned to them tenfold in the round of a fructifying commerce, made her look but to little support from her children at home.—To drop all metaphor, she was an *untaxed* country; except to that wholesome extent which wise policy should dictate to every government, by making the property of the subject depend in some measure upon the security of the state.

"The prosperity which then exalted her, after all her dangerous divisions had been swept away by an auspicious renovation of her constitution, was unexampled, and although she has been thought by some to have risen much

higher

higher afterwards amidst a splendid career of national glory; yet she then perhaps touched her meridian height, not having at that time embarked in an habitual system of expenditure, beyond the golden medium just adverted to, her debt being then no larger than to create a wide spread interest to support the state, but leaving what might be fairly termed the full fruits of industry and talents, subject to no tormenting visitations of a prodigal government, which can in the end have no escape from bankruptcy but by rendering its subjects bankrupt.—In the first condition of a nation, the people may be compared to the crew of a well manned vessel in a prosperous voyage, called upon for no exertions but to forward her in her course: the second may be better likened to the toils and sufferings of a tempest, when the ship can only be kept even in doubtful safety, by incessant pumping, when all hopes of advantage are extinguished, and the only principle of obedience is the preservation of life.

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"Unhappily for Armata, the lust of dominion, or rather of revenue, beyond the usefulness or even the capacity of enjoyment, ensnared her into a contest with a great and growing people, to obtain by force what duty and affection had spontaneously held out to her.

"I pointed out metaphorically to your view two vast continents under her imperial wings: one of them, to which, looking southward, her right extended, she had planted and peopled. The inhabitants of Hesperia were her own children, worshipping with the same rites the God of their common fathers, speaking the same language, following in the track of the same laws and customs which fashion and characterise a people.—Armata, in short, ruled by the freest consent the whole of this vast country, appointed without question all her magistrates, and enjoyed a monopoly of her commerce, not only in the exclusive import of her various productions into her own bosom, but in the monopolous return of all her own manufactures:

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which, from the rapid progress of population throughout that immense region, was in itself an inexhaustible source of wealth, setting perfectly at nought the entire intercourse of our whole world besides.

" Shall I be then believed when I tell you that with *all this* Armata was not satisfied, but insisted that an useful, affectionate, and distant people should pay for the support of wars she had been foolishly involved in at the other extremity of our planet?—Can the human imagination extend farther to the belief, that even *this monstrous claim* was acceded to?—the children of a misguided parent desired only to know what she demanded, that they might have the grace of rendering it as a spontaneous grant, to be bestowed under the same forms of government and under the sanction of the very magistrates which she herself had created for the purpose.—Must I lastly trespass upon, or rather insult, your credulity, by telling you that even *this* offer was refused? Though revenue was the

object,

object, the unlimited grant was rejected, and the revenue after all given up to enforce a nominal demand.—Many eloquent and solemn protests of our most illustrious men of that time were opposed in vain to this insane project. The whole strength of Armata was put forth, and her armies invaded a country so much more extensive than her own, that when collected upon its adverse surface, they could scarcely hear the sound of one another's cannon.—Need I conclude by adding that they were all taken like so many birds in the net of the fowler, and the dominion of Armata, which before had stood upon a rock, was renounced by Hesperia for ever—at first in defiance---but at last, when the combat became manifestly hopeless, dissolved by mutual consent."

When my friend had finished this marvellous or rather incredible history, you will not, reader, be surprized that I interrupted him for a moment, much as I was alive to hear its continuation, by asking only one question. "How," I

 said,

said, "could it possibly happen, that with so celebrated a constitution as he himself had described, and when the people had obtained so complete a controul over the public counsels, they should have suffered so unjust and ruinous a war to be so long persisted in, contrary to their most manifest interests, and in the face of the most enlightened opinions?"

"The answer to your question," replied my friend, "involves one of the most curious and extraordinary changes that has ever taken place in the political history of any nation. In the earlier periods of that of Armata, though the sovereigns had more power, and the people's representatives were comparatively nothing in the balance, the Hesperian war could not have been carried on. The delegates of the people would have strenuously opposed it in every stage of its disastrous progress—the whole nation would have upheld them, and the government even, if not subdued, would have been overawed and checked in its impolitic course;

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but before this period, the ancient system of the government had been completely inverted; the popular council, though in theory scarcely entitled to that name or character, had for ages fulfilled all the practical purposes of the most perfect representation; because, having the same interests with the universal mass of population, and nothing then existing to seduce them from the discharge of their duties, it mattered not by whom they were elected; but the time was arrived when the right of election became a vital principle.—The crown was now possessed of a great revenue, which was rapidly increasing, and as the Commons had advanced in power and importance, it was thought convenient by its ministers to act no longer upon their own responsibility, even in the most ordinary details of business, but to take their constitutional opponents into pay and make them ministers in their stead; well knowing that they could not possibly oppose, nor even censure the measures which were their own.—Neither can it be matter of wonder that the

 people

people at large, though wise to a proverb, should be the dupes of so artful a contrivance.—They had been long accustomed to regard every act of the executive power with the most jealous apprehension, and to consider the voice of their representatives who had never betrayed them as the Law and the Gospel.—When they saw, therefore, the crown upon this momentous occasion so humbly deferring to the wisdom, as it was called, of the national council; when its ministers were entirely behind the curtain, and every step that was taken was by the authority of their own servants, they threw up their caps into the air, and poured in addresses from every part of the island, offering their lives and fortunes in support of the glorious contest; gifts which unhappily no opportunity was left them to recal, the personal supporters of the war being knocked on the head, and the pockets of the rest completely emptied.—When the illusion was at length dissolved by disappointment and defeat, an universal hue and cry was raised against the whole system, set on foot by its

loudest supporters; and the minister of that day, a most able statesman, though in that matter undoubtedly mistaken, and in private life one of the most agreeable and amiable of mankind, was attacked without measure or mercy.—He manfully stood his ground; and, I am persuaded, with a clear conscience maintained the policy and justice of his administration; but the most zealous of his adherents now seeing the clearest reasons for condemning him, though none whatever existed which had not been as manifest from the outset, and many more finding it impossible from business to be in their places to defend him, though they had nothing at all to do, he was compelled to retire; and in a few weeks afterwards a man would have been probably mobbed in the streets, or perhaps imprisoned as a lunatic, if he had been rash enough to assert that the whole nation had been otherwise than mad, and without a lucid interval for fourteen years together."

"And pray, Sir," I said, "has this system

continued ever since?"—" Not exactly," answered Morven, " but, if possible, worse; just as a dropsical patient fills in the proportion of what he drinks.—The subject is most interesting and important.—The English, from my father's account, must be the wisest of mankind, and, though the inhabitants of another world, their wisdom, through you, may direct us."

" Wisdom," I answered, " in the pûre abstract, can hardly be brought to bear upon human conduct.—There must be some direct experience, or at least some analogy, to give it effect.—Upon this subject there is neither.—You might as well set yourself to consider what the inhabitants of the moon, which belongs alike to both of us, would probably think of your condition; or those of Jupiter, or Saturn, or of the seven stars that form the Pleïades, if they are inhabited, and if not, you must be handed on for an opinion to the planets which probably surround them, for England cannot possibly assist you in a case which has no reference to her own

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government, nor to any of her own concerns; but, go on, I am delighted with your discourse; only remember that history is a grave and momentous subject, and that wit and fancy belong to quite different departments."— I said this because my friend was remarkable for both, and whether he was in jest or in earnest it was not always very easy to know: but as I found him to be a man of unquestionable veracity, I was compelled to assent to the truth of his narrative, on his solemnly assuring me that he had departed in nothing from the truth.

CHAP-

CHAPTER VI.

In which Morven still continues his Account of the Island of Armata.

"THIS memorable æra in the history of Armata may perhaps be considered as almost the first in which her representative constitution exhibited any proofs of dangerous imperfection.—The crown (as I have said) was rapidly acquiring the administration of a great revenue, and a sufficient guard had not been placed upon its influence in the public councils, without which no forms of election, however free and extensive, can secure a wise and prudent administration; but the evil must manifestly be greater when the popular council, erected as the balance of a monarchical state, does not emanate from the people, but in its greater part from the crown which is to be balanced, and from a body of nobles, powerful from rank and property, who are to be balanced also; and who have besides

a scale

a scale properly allotted to them, in which their great weight is judiciously deposited.—It must be obvious to the meanest capacity, that if those very powers which are thus to be balanced can create or materially influence the antagonist power which is to controul them, the constitution must at all events be theoretically imperfect.—I have already informed you why, for a long period, this imperfection had not been felt, and the degree of its operation, when it began to operate, and as it now exists, ought to be correctly and temperately stated; because, without a reverence for government, whatever defects may be discovered in it, a nation must be dissolved.

"You are not therefore to imagine that the portentous war I have described to you arose from a general and wicked prostitution of high station in those who had in a manner the choice of the popular council, nor from a vile corrupt sale of their voices by those who had been chosen, feeling at the time that they were de-

voting

voting their country to disastrous consequences —this I think has never happened, nor is likely to happen in Armata; because her people are so enlightened, their various classes are so happily blended with each other, and the interest in wise counsels is so universal, that a *clear* and general conviction of misgovernment would then and now have an irresistible effect upon the public councils however constituted; but the great evil is in cases of doubtful policy, which the worst measures in their beginnings often are: and he must be but little acquainted with the human mind, who does not know by what deceptious means, even very honest and intelligent men may be brought to view *questionable* subjects in the light that best corresponds with their interest and their wishes.

"On the very occasion before us it was not very difficult to conceal some facts, and to overstate others, more especially when the matter to be judged of was at an immense distance, and complicated in the details; some had not

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the capacity, nor many more the application to digest them, and even supposing the case to have been fairly stated, the rule from time to time to be applied to it was often beyond the reach of those who were to decide, and came for their decision adorned with gifts and graces to secure the most favourable reception.—The public effect also of the decision I have already explained to you.—It was no longer the act of a power for ages the object of jealous apprehension, but of those who for ages had faithfully controuled it, and the judgment of the people was surprized.

"The period of the delusion you have also heard.—The consequences of extreme misgovernment must be universally felt, and the discontents they produce are irresistible; but unfortunately they seldom arrive until the evil complained of is beyond redress. The crown is sure in the *dubious season* to command the popular council, and through them popular opinion, until errors become palpable and destructive, when

when the most over ruling influence must give way.—This is the real and the only defect in the constitution of Armata; which, from its wisdom and the happiness it produces, casts into the deepest shade the most perfect institutions of mankind.—All the separate parts of it are excellent and well proportioned, if they were allowed to stand in their places, but government had now begun to be carried on by a conspiracy of powers which should balance and controul one another." "How much then," I eagerly said, "is it not to be lamented, that when such an evil was first discovered it was not *immediately* corrected." "Your observation," answered my friend, "is far more important than perhaps you are aware of.—To have *then* corrected it, or even at many subsequent periods, could not in the nature of things have convulsed or even disturbed the balance of the different orders so vitally necessary for the security of all; but by having suffered the defect to continue for a long season, its consequences have also increased, and have produced so strong a

feeling

feeling of irritation, that the most cautious reformation becomes, with every man of sound discretion, a matter which calls for the most impartial and even trembling consideration.— This observation is not, however, intended to convey an opinion that a safe and salutary amendment is impracticable. A surgeon often examines his patient with a trembling hand, when he is considering whether he shall attempt an operation; but when his judgment is satisfied, it trembles no longer.

"One mighty benefit, a well timed and judicious reformation, if it can be accomplished with safety, would *most certainly* produce.—The legislature would be more an object of respect and affection in the minds of the people, the highest security against a spirit of disaffection and revolt.—It is infinitely dangerous when bad men, who seek to promote revolution by exposing the defects of the public councils, can plead the truth, or even any thing approaching it, in their defence.—Positive law may protect

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a strumpet when her reputation is invaded, but the appeal to it only serves to make her prostitution more notorious, and the libeller, when punished, an object of compassion.

"When any palpable imperfection exists in a government,. it becomes the hotbed of sedition; and it is the more impolitic to suffer it to continue when its great leading principles, like those of Armata, are so perfect.—Where a tyranny indeed exists, or any government, however composed, whose interests are different from those of the people, no reformation could be hoped for with their consent, because they could not be reformed without the surrender of injurious powers which they would have a corrupt advantage in preserving; but in a country like this, that has opened her arms to receive you, where there is but one sentiment of public spirit and virtue pervading alike the public councils which from defective forms may require reformation, and those who seek to reform them, there can be no difference in opinion except

cept *in the consequences of any change.*—That part of the subject is too deep for my decision; yet I find it difficult to conceive how a representation embracing a larger proportion of a wise and moral people could have a greater tendency to produce insecurity, than when it emanates only from those whom the laws have directed to be balanced.—A few individuals might seek to extend their own powers at the expense of the liberties of the people, but the *people themselves* could surely have no interest in usurping a greater authority than was consistent with the equilibrium of a constitution which for centuries had been the just object of their national pride, and the admiration of a world it has enlightened.

"Attending to all these considerations, have you *now*," said Morven, "any difficulty in forming an opinion on this important subject, putting England wholly out of the question?"

"For the reasons I have already given you,"

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I answered, "I can form no useful judgment in a case so new to me; but there is one principle so clear and so universal, that it must apply equally to all subjects, to the affairs of all countries, and even of all worlds. The first step towards public reformation of every description, is a firm combination against rash and violent men.—Very many of them (perhaps the bulk) are perfectly well intentioned, but not for all that the less dangerous to the cause they would support.—Some of them, indeed, one would think were in our world set on to take the lead by those who opposed any changes, that wise men might retire altogether from the pursuit. For my own part, I would not only submit to the imperfections of such an admirable constitution at you have described in Armata, but would consent to the continuance of the worst that can be imagined, rather than mix myself with ignorance, thrusting itself before the wisdom which should direct it, or with persons of desperate fortunes, whom no sound state of society could relieve; but such men, I think, could

could work no mischief, if rank and property stood honestly and manfully in their places.

"From your own account, however, it appears to me, upon the whole, to be a question which demands the most dispassionate consideration, because the consequences are far from being clear.—The principle of balance has been long *departed* from, and reciprocal jealousies between your crown and your commons have been laid asleep.—Prerogative (depending wholly upon influence) has exerted itself in nothing, and the whole executive government has been, *with its own consent*, carried on in your popular council.—*This* has bestowed upon it an entirely *new* character, and from the operation of other causes, its powers have no *actual* limitation, though theory defines and limits them.—How far, therefore, *under such circumstances*, it might be safe entirely to recast this great assembly, and to disturb a system, which without any new organization has in a manner created a new constitution, it is not for a stranger to pronounce.

On the one hand, I should be sorry to see the powers of your commons in the smallest degree diminished or struck at; but on the other, in proportion as they are transcendant, they should be, *as far as can be made safely practicable,* in the choice and under the controul of the great body of your people."

CHAP-

CHAPTER VII.

In which Morven still continues his Account of Armata, and points to the origin of a great Revolution.

"No country but Armata could have surmounted, as she did, so disastrous a conflict as the Hesperian war; but such is the energy of her extraordinary people, that after a short depression, she roused herself like a strong man after sleep, and stood again erect, to sustain the shock of events still more disastrous, which followed in its train.

"The nearest country to us is CAPETIA, a kingdom of great extent and population; but notwithstanding our vicinity and common origin, the people perhaps of no two planets or worlds can be more completely different, and from a mistaken policy in the governments of both for many ages, this difference between them has been always increasing, and ancient an-

antipathies have been exasperated and confirmed. You will not, therefore, be surprized, that when Capetia saw this domestic quarrel she should seize the opportunity of turning it to her own advantage.—In the cause of it she could take no other interest than mischief, as the colonies of Armata were contending for their liberties; whereas the Capetians had been for ages the devoted subjects of a monarchy nearly despotic, and seemed to glory in their degradation.—The apologists of Capetia have said that her king was advised to assist the revolted subjects of Armata at a distance, to turn the thoughts of his people from disturbing their own government at home: but be that as it may, a large army was sent by him beyond the seas, was encamped with the insurgents, and fought side by side with them in Hesperia—became enthusiasts in their cause, and was schooled for the first time in the principles of a free government, to which the Capetian people had before been strangers.—To maintain this auxiliary army, and to support the war which was of course declared against her for

this perfidious alliance, the treasures which had been set aside for the extinguishment of her public debt were devoted to the prosecution of this expensive contest; and on its successful termination, the Capetian soldiers, after having been sharers in the triumphs of freedom, were recalled by their self-devoted country into her own bosom—she found a nest of serpents—Her finances were exhausted by her profligate exertions, her people were discontented, and the ordinary machinery of her government being unequal to the supply of the deficiencies in her revenue, she was driven in a most inauspicious moment to resort to an ancient constitution, which had been long trampled upon and set aside, but she had neither the skill to wield a weapon, the use of which had been long forgotten, nor the honesty to stand fairly by the popular assembly, whose assistance she had invoked.—It is not for me to become the historian of Capetia, above all to an inhabitant of another world, who can take no interest in her affairs; it is enough to say, that her government fell to

the ground, and was dissolved in blood—that her monarch was cut off—her ancient magistracies annihilated, and the persons of her magistrates destroyed or exiled; whilst the great mass of her people, who in no country are ever indignant but when they have suffered indignities, deprived of the support of their departed government, defective as it was, and too unskilful and distracted to proceed with wisdom or justice in the organization of a new one, became at once the perpetrators and the victims of crimes too horrible for the ear.

"It is but justice, however, to this unhappy people to remark, that their history had been widely different from ours. In the remoter ages, when nations were the property of kings and the people were like the cattle upon the soil, inferior sovereignties had from time to time fallen in by inheritance, or had been annexed by conquest, until the sceptre extended over an immense and various population, with customs as numerous and as different as their origins; without any

common

common bond of union, and with minds enthralled by priestcraft, or subdued by despotism, to suffer without a murmur, and even to glory in the fetters which bound them.—On this base condition, no light had been let in, as in Armata, by an early commerce encircling a world; by the influences of a purer religion, bursting from the chains of superstition, nor by the combination, as with us, of all classes of the people, with the same interest to resist injustice when it pressed equally upon the whole:—but by an universal law of nature, all violent inequalities have their periods.—The air under its rough dominion is brought to its equipoise by tempests, and civil life by revolutions.—As Capetia grew in power and greatness, these inequalities became more odious; the simplicity of her ancient government, which I before described to you, as the general system of the robuster nations, had lost its character of freedom, and had given way to a dominion in which the people had no share, whilst the nobles and great landholders, instead of standing in their places, as in Armata,

became

became the obsequious satellites of the throne, whilst the clergy, who depended upon both, inculcated submission.—Yet still, whilst the multitude felt no extreme changes in their condition, such a government could suffer no change; but when, from the causes I have brought before you, the defects of this system began to be grievously and universally felt, *then* was the time for the few to have been wise, and not to have waited for an infuriated multitude to break in upon them.—The impending ruin was so long visible before it came to its fatal crisis, that many wrongs and sufferings may be said to have been almost chargeable upon the victims. Such scenes of horror, though cast in my infancy into this new scene of existence, thanks to the Almighty! can never reach me *here.*—We have our faults and our follies, and we seem now and then so enflamed against one another, as if some mighty contest were approaching, but such sudden heats have no more power to subvert our constitution, than a common pimple upon the skin to destroy the body.—Our rights, our

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properties, and our securities, are so bound up and intervoven, that from the prince upon the throne to the beggar in the streets with his tattered hat held out to you, we are as it were but ONE BEING, and nothing but universal death can dissolve us.

"In reverting to the undone Capetia, I wish I could throw a veil over this afflicting period.— In following my rapid abridgment you must be aware, that such a tremendous accumulation of horrors could not be condensed into a day.— They began in the delirium of popular fury, which could no more be calmed or resisted by the higher orders amongst themselves, nor by foreign assistance, than the desolations of an earthquake can by any human means be averted; but when the victims of the distracted insurrections had been dispersed, and when arranged under more civilized and reflecting leaders, they began to contemplate the preservation of their monarchy; *then* was the moment for Armata to have stood forward—*then* perhaps she

she might have put aside the calamities which followed, the consequences of which are not yet wound up, nor within the reach of the wisest to foreknow.

"The Capetian people, except in the frantic moments of this sanguinary crisis, were notoriously devoted to a monarchical government; and even in the whirlwind of revolution could never have been driven from it, if proper means had been taken to prevent it.—Their earliest leaders professed openly and with an undisturbed support from a national council, to preserve the kingly government in the person of their King, under a balanced constitution, and when the storm was gathering at a distance to overpower it, the supplication which in his name they addressed to the Sovereign of Armata will be considered hereafter as the most afflicting and affecting document which history can ever have to record.—That unhappy prince only asked the commanding influence of this great country with alarmed and confederating governments.

ments.—He complained of the hostile armies which were surrounding his territories, and painted with but too prophetic a pencil the calamities impending over the nations that were assembling them; yet asked nothing for himself or for his people, than as they themselves should preserve peace, *and respect the independence of all other nations.* I will translate for you hereafter into the English language the whole of this pathetic supplication, with the answer to it, which I shall at present only abridge.—You ought to carry them into your own world, if you ever shall return to it, as the greatest curiosity that can be furnished by our's, or perhaps amongst all those that are now twinkling over our heads, even if they were to raise one by way of subscription through infinite space.—Perhaps the most curious part of the latter composition is, *that the ink was not frozen in writing it.*—It was a grand effort for an able statesman capable of saying every thing, to succeed so perfectly in saying nothing, and with the

strongest and most animated feelings of his own, to become the torpedo of the Armatian cabinet.

"That you may fully understand this answer, I ought to premise that it was not even alleged in it, that the suppliant monarch had forfeited his claim to the compassion or favour of Armata, as he was covered all over with assurances of the warmest friendship; yet his Majesty's concurrence in the preservation or re-establishment of peace with the powers in question, was promised only through means *compatible with his dignity, and with the principles which governed his conduct;* and that the same reasons which had induced him to take no part in the *internal affairs* of Capetia, ought equally to induce him to respect *the rights and independence of other sovereigns,* especially those who were in friendship with himself. The mediation was thus declined with another concluding reason: —*because the war being now begun, the intervention*

vention of the King's good offices could be of no use, unless they were desired by all parties interested.

"Now, bringing down this proceeding from the high forms of diplomacy, what was it?

"The surrounding sovereigns, and even those remotely distant, were preparing to invade Capetia, then grievously and dangerously convulsed; but making an effort through her still-existing sovereign to tranquillize herself by entering into solemn engagements for the tranquillity of other nations, and ARMATA was fixed upon as the most powerful amongst them all, to take the lead in this sublime object of morals and policy when a storm was gathering which threatened almost to deluge our world with blood.

"It may be admitted that there might nevertheless have been reasons for Armata, though thus invoked, to pause upon the proposition made

made to her.—She was not bound to be contented with *general professions*, but might have claimed the character of arbitrator *upon her own terms*, and have demanded preliminary securities for the performance of her award; and if she found that notwithstanding the dispositions of the sovereign who addressed her, his subjects were incapable of performing any engagements he might stipulate, *that* reason, *after due investigation*, might have been acted upon, *and even publicly assigned* for declining the mediation; or supposing them to have been capable of acting as a nation, yet, if there were doubts of their performing their parts with sincerity, Armata, as the sovereign umpire, might have proposed to add her mighty strength to that of confederating monarchs upon any breach of the conditions she might propose. But instead of this, or any part of it, or the profession of any one principle which ever entered a negociation for peace, this wretched prince, whose life then hung by a thread, but which might have been strengthened into a cable if the mediation had

been

been accepted, was *first* told (as you have heard) that the King of Armata could only concur in maintaining the peace of nations *by such means as were compatible with his dignity,* without even a hint of how his dignity could be lowered by becoming BLESSED as a peace-maker; and, *secondly,* that he could only act *according to the principles which governed his conduct;* without saying a syllable of what those principles were, or HOW, *without his changing them, the supplicant might bring himself within them.*

"The King of Armata was then further advised to say, *that not having interfered with the internal affairs of Capetia, the same sentiments ought to induce him to respect the rights and independence of other princes,* as if it ever had been heard of as an invasion of the rights of man or nation, to propose *(if they themselves should see no objection)* to become an arbitrator to avert desolation and bloodshed.

"The conclusion was in the happiest har-

mony with the introductory parts; his Majesty being advised to finish by declaring, '*that* THE 'WAR BEING THEN BEGUN, *his good offices could* '*be of no use unless they should be desired by all* '*parties interested.*' Now according to this doctrine, it must be taken to be always too late to mediate *after a quarrel has begun*, which I had always before considered to be *the very cause*, in all concerns, both public and private, for proposing a mediation; and if, according to this answer, mediation can be of no use unless desired by all parties, then not only no mediation could ever be useful, but few if any could possibly exist, because the desire of settling differences between contending parties, can rarely be to a moment simultaneous; and all that was asked of Armata was only that she should be the *first proposer* of this pacific umpirage, and that she should strengthen her proposal by the justly commanding influence of her wise and liberal counsels.

" If indeed she had accepted this god-like office,

office, and its usefulness had been disappointed by the obstinacy of other nations, the concluding sentence would then have been correct; but without even sounding the inclination of other princes on the subject, it is without parallel in the annals of nations, in the records of the courts of justice, or in the transactions of individual men.—The truth is, that it was the answer of a government which had determined to do *nothing*, and to give *no reasons*.—There was AT THAT TIME, in my opinion, a conspiracy of kings against this unhappy nation, because, *though without knowing how to accomplish it*, she had determined to become free without asking their consent.—When you hear this from *my lips* it deserves *some credit*, because I am no friend to republics, *and would shed the last drop of my blood for a monarchy like our own.*—But, *be it remembered*, as I have before related, that it was *re-established* by our own people when its true principles had been overborne.

" Wishing however to do all justice to others

whilst

whilst I maintain firmly my own opinions, I admit that this was the answer of a most able statesman, of cool reflecting habits, not less remarkable for enlightened opinions than for eloquence in their support, and I verily believe incapable of betraying the honour or interests of his country.—Were he now to hear what I am saying to you, he would, I am sure, give me credit for equal integrity, but from having long considered the subject in an opposite point of view, would wonder as much at my delusion as I have always wondered at his.—I must add, however, that he was not the minister, though he held the official pen, and I have never been able to persuade myself that it could have been a feather from his own wing.

"At this critical period, when mediation was thus rejected—critical even to a moment of time, if Armata had raised her voice amongst the nations, and had invited them to concur in the support of the party *(no matter what else belonged to it)* which then supported the throne,

or

or at all events to take no concern in the internal government of that country whilst their own territories were not invaded, she might have given to that distracted people a free constitution, have put down for ever the prejudices which had so long been the sources of perpetual warfare, and raised perhaps an immortal monument of universal freedom.

" In the history however of this momentous crisis, and to support this opinion, the utmost precision *as to time* is necessary, because many still deny that there ever existed any confederacy of hostile nations antecedent to hostilities against themselves; but to dispose of this assertion it may be accepted as truth, and the argument will then stand thus:—With the powers then confederated, or confederating, *or that only afterwards in their own defence did confederate*, the mediation of Armata, if not imperative and conclusive, would have had a most healing and conciliating effect.— *At that period* no invasion of other nations

 had

had taken place, since even the paper war of her frantic democracy had ceased, and its offensive character had been disavowed.—The long succession of unprincipled, ferocious factions, which followed the rejected mediation, has always been resorted to as proof that there was no safety but in the hostile system which was adopted; but they who hold out those insecurities *at a later period than the one I have pointed out*, should at least be prepared to shew the danger which the *earlier* mediation might have produced.—It would be no argument in favour of a physician who was skilfully coercing a maniac, and reducing his dangerous strength, if it could be shewn, that by a different treatment in the beginning, his fever might probably have been subdued, and his reason completely restored.—It would surely at least lie upon him to shew that he had made *some trial of his art on the first symptoms of the disease.*

" My confidence in this opinion is the more

unshaken

unshaken from the recollection that I held it at the very time, in common with a man whom to have known as I did would have repaid all the toils and perils you have undergone.—I look upon you, indeed, as a benighted traveller, to have been cast upon our shores after this great light was set.—Never was a being gifted with an understanding so perfect, nor aided by a perception which suffered nothing to escape from its dominion.—He was never known to omit any thing which in the slightest degree could affect the matter to be considered, nor to confound things at all distinguishable, however apparently the same, and his conclusions were always so luminous and convincing, that you might as firmly depend upon them as when substances in nature lie before you in the palpable forms assigned to them from the foundation of the world.—Such were his qualifications for the office of a statesman: and his profound knowledge always under the guidance of the sublime simplicity of his heart, softening without unnerving the giant strength of his intellect, gave

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a character to his eloquence which I shall not attempt to describe, knowing nothing by which it may be compared.

"Had the counsels of this great man been accepted, much more if he himself had been to carry them into execution with his eminent companions, I must ever think that the peace of our world might have been preserved.—I have not forgotten that great numbers of wise and independent men *then* held and with equal firmness persevere in the contrary opinion; but their grand reason in support of it was never supported by the fact.—Their whole argument resting upon the danger to our monarchical constitution from *republican infection;* but if the course I have insisted on had been adopted, the Capetian monarchy might most probably have been preserved, and there would have been *then no republic to infect us!*"

My blood now rising in every vein, I could not help exclaiming, "Oh, that ENGLAND had been

been ARMATA—how differently would SHE have acted!—As nothing ought to have detached you from the forms and principles of your own government, it might have been incumbent at that period to watch over them with extraordinary caution; but self-preservation, though it vindicates our securing our dwellings by any means from an approaching conflagration, can never justify the refusal of personal assistance to snatch the sufferers from the flames.—As to *republican infection*, even if *Capetia had then been a republic*, you, surely, must be infected yourself with some strange delusion to apply it to such a subject.—The nations preparing to invade her whose governments had never been reformed, might, according to your new phraseology, have dreaded such a contagion; *but after what you yourself have within a moment related of Armata, what had she to fear from it?* —nothing below is perfect—her almost divine institutions might have been thought capable of still higher improvements, *but there was no food within her land for* REVOLUTION.—Thus

when

when our world is visited by one of its most malignant and contagious maladies it is alarming only to those *who have never had it.*—It is a disease only attracted by some morbid matter in almost every human body; but which, when once dispersed by the fever it excites, can never be excited again.—Wisdom therefore with us has disappointed its tremendous ravages, by raising this fever herself; chusing her own mode and her own time for doing it; safely and mildly reforming the constitution which had formerly perished by a revolution, in all the springs of life.—I cannot dismiss this metaphor (it is indeed too close to the subject to be called one) without applying it to Capetia also.—SHE, no doubt, caught the infection, as you are pleased to call it, from her contact with Hesperia, but she was in a condition only to receive it with confluent inflammation.—Her state was so foul that its foulness could not be extracted without such a shock, as in the natural body would have been death; but if her history had been like that of Armata, as you yourself have

told

told it—if all the classes of her people had been, like your's, harmoniously blended, and she had been purified as you progressively became purer, she could no more have expired in the convulsions you are describing than a patient who with us has been vaccinated can be stretched out by it a loathsome carcass covered with putrid blotches, spreading pestilence and terror till the earth swallows him up.—Go on, then, to explain the mystery of this conduct.—You had been placed by Providence, as you set out by telling me, as its instrument and agent in your world, and it appears to me that you slept upon your post when you ought to have been most upon the alert in the fulfilment of your duty." "I feel the force of all you say," answered Morven, "but I hasten to pass by this painful subject.—Individual opinions ought to be held as nothing against public counsels, though it is our best privilege to express them, and I should not have insisted upon them at so remote a period, but that they usefully connect themselves with the events which will

soon

soon conclude my narrative, in disclosing to you our present condition."

"That might be a good reason," I said, "for reserve, if you were publishing a history, but none for baulking the curiosity you have set on fire to find the clue to so extraordinary a state of things."—"I can give it you, then," replied Morven, "very shortly;" and he then proceeded as the reader will find in the following chapter.



CHAP-

CHAPTER VIII.

In which Morven points out to the Author some additional Causes of the Revolutionary War with Capetia.

"MATERIALS for the annals of nations are difficult to be obtained; they are often secret, and are fugitive even when they can be traced. Histories, therefore, when written at distant periods, *except when they are built upon contemporary information, judiciously selected by eminent men of letters*, cannot but be erroneous.—This very period, involving the interests of almost all nations, most strikingly illustrates this truth.—It depended upon the combination of so many circumstances, that, without being a predestinarian, I am almost puzzled otherwise to account for them.

"The astonishing events which are soon to close my narrative, could not, upon any human calculation, *(at least in my opinion,)* have happened

pened as they did, without the commanding talents of an extraordinary young man, who yet might not have flourished at so early an age, but from being the son of *another* man who had justly acquired a great reputation in our country by superior eloquence, always exerted in the cause of freedom; nor could his descendant, eloquent as he was, have risen to so premature an eminence but by treading in his father's steps, pleading the cause of public reformation, which *at that time* was highly popular, and of which he too took the lead in his very earliest youth: neither could even this illustrious course have produced the events which followed, but on the contrary might have averted them, if he had not turned short round on a sudden and not only renounced his former opinions, but sounded the alarm when others persevered in the sentiments they had imbibed from his own lips.—But history is a libel when it departs in any thing from the truth.—It must be admitted that the influence of the Capetian revolution had given an inflamed

flamed and dangerous character to the proceedings of many who had mixed themselves with this cause, demanding the most prompt vigilance of our government, and the firmest execution of the laws; but perhaps no man existing was therefore so well qualified as himself to have changed those turbulent excesses, and turned them, upon his own principles, into a safer course; a duty which, without assorting himself *unfitly*, he had the happiest opportunity of fulfilling, through an association of his own equals in rank and eminence, who were then discountenancing by their influence and example every departure from the sound opinions and declarations recently published by himself in his own name, and widely circulated amongst the people: yet the birth of this very association, (as far at least as times coincide,) was made the signal of universal alarm, and a proclamation by his authority almost instantly followed, which being the obvious forerunner of war, put wholly out of the question that politic and humane consideration for the suf-

suffering people of Capetia, which I shall die in the opinion of having been at the period before related the interest and the duty of the whole civilized world.

"I take no delight in these observations.—Posthumous reputation is often held too lightly.—We consider that the dead can gain nothing by our applauses, nor suffer from our censures: but supposing a man whilst living to have stood alone like a rock in the ocean, without children or kindred to represent him, I should still remember that this life was but a portion of an immortal existence, and fame being the highest inheritance, I should feel like a felon if I robbed him of what I believed to be his own.—I knew, then, this great minister in his youth, and foresaw his future destination.—His understanding was vigorous and comprehensive—his reasoning clear and energetic—his eloquence powerful and commanding—and as he was supported throughout his eventful career by immense numbers of disinterested and independent

men,

men, it would be unjust not to believe that he was himself disinterested and independent.—His memory after death received this tribute from many illustrious persons who had differed from him in opinion, and it is not only held by his friends and adherents in affectionate remembrance, but in reverence as the saviour of his country.—Having from a sense of justice recorded this *last* testimony of an exalted reputation, I hold it to be a solemn duty to question and deny it, being convinced that if we *revere*, or even *abide* by the system which characterized his administration as having *formerly* saved his country, we shall not save it NOW.

" But to resume my history.—The circumstances which attended this ill-fated period are not yet summed up.—When the war with Hesperia was approaching, a warning voice, as it were out of Heaven itself, from its wisdom and eloquence, though drowned by the clamours of ignorance and folly in the outset, yet in

the end alarmed the people into a sense of the ruin they were rushing on; but, alas! this very voice, which had breathed so happily the gentle accents of peace, was now heard louder than the trumpet of war, to collect our world to battle; spreading throughout the land an universal panic, until the public councils complained of sedition, but the *forum of the complaint* only inflamed it.—Instead of leaving it to the sovereign, in the ordinary course of law, to bring the suspected to trial, the evidence was collected by the great public councils; was exalted into treason of the highest order, and published by their command.—It was no doubt within their jurisdiction, and was their highest duty to protect the state; to proclaim a conspiracy if they believed it existed, and to direct prosecutions against the offenders; but it was repugnant to the very elements of the Armatian constitution, to involve individuals in the accusations, and to circulate amongst the people the accusing testimonies stamped with their supreme authority, when inferior tribunals were after-

wards

wards to judge them.—In any other nation the consequences to the accused must have been FATAL: but there is a talisman in Armata which, whilst it is preserved inviolate, will make her immortal,—HER COURTS OF JUSTICE SPOKE ALOUD TO HER PARLIAMENT: —THUS FAR SHALT THOU GO, AND NO FARTHER.

"In returning to, or rather beginning an account of this extraordinary composition, whose author was only in metaphor brought before you, your surprize at its warlike stimulus will be increased, because I could have subscribed almost to the whole of it except in its REMOTEST APPLICATION.

"He set out by truly and perhaps seasonably observing, 'that men were not the insects of a summer, but beings of a superior order, the heirs of immortality—that they should therefore look upwards with pious reverence to their fathers, and downwards with anxious care to their pos-

 terity—

terity—that when they had accomplished a structure sufficient to maintain social order, much more to govern a great and enlightened people, it was more convenient to repair it when time had defaced it, and to improve it if originally defective, than to tumble it down in a moment to its foundations—that society was not a gang of miscreants, plundering and murdering one another, reviling all the institutions ordained to lead us into the paths of happiness and virtue, but a pyramid of human beings, rising in majestic order and harmonious in all its parts—that it was fit religion should consecrate such a structure—that her ministers should therefore be held in high respect, and should not be supported on the alms of those whom it was their duty to correct—that government also should preserve an attitude of dignity and wisdom, composed of high magistrates, invested with corresponding authorities and supported by revenues to secure obedience and independence—that a people, above all, for whose happiness this mighty system was fashioned and

sup-

supported, should in their morals and manners be assimilated; that they should not be buried like dogs, as if they were to sleep for ever, but be remembered by monumental inscriptions, recording the achievements of those who had lived before them, and reminding the living that their histories would be read by those who were to follow them—that societies, however wisely constructed, were subject nevertheless to be shaken by the follies and wickedness of mankind, and that in those awful conjunctures the utmost fortitude became necessary to those who were to ride in such storms, yet tempered with a spirit of gentleness and mercy, shrinking back when called upon to strike, though justice and even necessity might demand the blow.'—He summed up all by a most eloquent reprobation of an unprincipled regicide, declaring in language which I hope will always be remembered, that the immolation of the unhappy prince whom fate had set upon this volcanic pinnacle, and who, without any crimes of his own, must, in the harshest construction, have been the vic-

tim of the crimes of others, was base and inhuman; and in its wanton aggravation by indignity and insult, embittered by the foul murder of his queen and their helpless infants, cast a dismal shade over the moral world, suffering, as it were, an eclipse by the interposition of some infernal spirit between the Divine Creator and the beings who must perish but in his light.—Believe me, I feel for the hallowed shade of departed genius, and have endeavoured not to degrade, though it is beyond my power to do justice to such a distinguished composition; but you have no doubt been looking in vain all this while, and through all this eloquence, for any possible incitement to war, though intended by himself and applied by others to justify and provoke it.—If the work had been undertaken to illustrate the principles and duties of civil society in the *pure abstract*, it would have been as just as it was beautiful; but as a picture of Capetia, *before* her revolution, it was unfounded almost throughout, and in all that *followed* it was only an exquisite and in many parts a sublime

ex-

exposure of the unhappy state to which she had been reduced by the desertion of Armata from her post: and how the rushing into battle with this delirious people was either to reform them or to secure ourselves, it is past my comprehension even to imagine."—"And of mine also," I hastily replied:—"had you nobody then to say so in your great public councils?"

"We had many," said Morven:—"occasions consummate the human character.—A political star of the first magnitude was then in his zenith, amidst a constellation of the brightest statesmen, who solemnly and repeatedly protested against the leap we were about to take, whilst we yet stood upon the brink.—They condemned the principle of this war, and foretold the consequences, but the delusion was too dense to be dispelled; and, that you may judge of its density, I will give you a specimen of the happiest and most approved manner in which this phalanx of great talents was opposed by those who supported their adversaries. To deny their

talents was impossible; and how do you think they went to work to run them down?—In no other way than by reiterating day after day in all accessible channels of public information, that *talents* were not only useless, but at all times perfectly ridiculous, and mischievously inconsistent with the wholesome government of a great nation.—You may think, perhaps, I am imposing upon you, or that I am in jest, as you have frequently before imagined; but I most seriously assure you, that this was the only order of the day amongst their opponents for years together." I laughed heartily, and said "it reminded me of the defence of a lunatic in England, before the commissioners who had imprisoned him:—He said that those who were at large were an insane majority, and shut up all the rest only because they had the sense to differ from them.—Now from the account you give me of Armata, at this period, your judges, I suppose, would have been imprisoned and the madman discharged."—"Perhaps they might," said Morven; "and indeed, since this new discovery,

covery, it is not at all an uncommon imposture to *pretend* even to be a natural fool, in hopes of superior preferment.

" But it is high time to return to the subject, though I seek no apology for the digression. A NOVEL derives its fame from the genius of its author, and its merit principally consists in a fanciful departure from truth; but the best written *History* can only be interesting when it is believed to be true."

CHAP-

CHAPTER IX.

In which Morven gives the Author an Account of the War with Capetia.

"A WAR now immediately followed between Armata and this unhappy country, which soon involving many other powerful nations against her, the entire mass of her population, from the very *instinct of self-preservation*, became one general camp; and her wild democracy being unequal to the rule of a people so circumstanced, the commander of her armies became her KING. The stupendous exertions she then made are unparalleled, and nothing could have prevented her from overpowering all the states confederated against her, but the wealth and energies of our extraordinary people.—We had lost the season at the outset, of turning Capetia into the paths of peace, or (if that were found to be hopeless) of leaving her to be herself consumed

sumed in the flames her madness had kindled; and even after they had spread beyond her own territories, and were laying waste our world, Armata, in various stages, might, under other counsels, have extinguished them.—Had the new dynasty of Capetia, when it became firmly established and supported by *the undoubted voice of her people*, been sincerely acknowledged by other nations before their resistance to it had first overwhelmed them, I see no reason for thinking that the general tranquillity might not have been more securely settled than by the destructive scenes that followed, which besides the waste of human life and the enormous additions to our public burthens, gave a new and alarming character to other nations, from the necessity of large military establishments, countenancing in our own country, from the danger of foreign combinations, a force beyond our finances, and at variance with the spirit of our free constitution.

"But the practicability of *safe* pacification

had its period.—When the extraordinary person at the head of the Capetian monarchy, who, under a different treatment, might have been to the full as pacific as other princes, began to see that his throne except through war was insecure, it is no wonder that after having trampled upon and overthrown so many powerful kingdoms, his ambition should be lifted up beyond perhaps the impulses of his original character, even to the hope of universal empire.—To have made peace with him *then*, though brought down at last to a seemingly safe level by signal reverses, when there was a fair prospect of his final subjugation, became a doubtful question in the councils of Armata, dividing those in opinion *who were divided in nothing else*, combining *for the occasion* the authors of the war and those who had always condemned and continued to condemn them.—On the one hand, in our exhausted condition, a failure of the force of nations, or even a protracted contest, would have been fatal, as they looked only to Armata for resources; but on the other hand, an humbled and

and mortified ambition might have been unsafely left at the head of a numerous and powerful people, even if his *original* dispositions had been like those of other men.—Animals, however large and powerful, if not by nature ferocious, may be handled as if they were our children, and are daily conducted with safety through our most populous cities, but when cruelly goaded and roused up almost to madness, they destroy every thing in their course, and there is then no safety but in their deaths.—It was nevertheless a most difficult matter for decision, and in a case where such imminent dangers were on either side impending, it would be most unfair in weighing them, to measure them by the events I am to relate; but it is impossible to be the historian of Armata in such a crisis of her affairs without expressing the utmost admiration of the character of her people.

" When from her mistaken counsels, she was so deeply involved at last, as to have no safe retreat from the course she had taken, she then

rose even superior to herself, great and powerful as she ever had been—the combined nations were *in themselves* nothing—they had indeed brave and numerous armies, but without the sinews of war they were no better than the leaden men which are sold as toys for our children; —the money of Armata could alone breathe life into them or set them in motion, and it was for her alone to march them from the remotest regions, to end the contest in the Capetian capital; but though the husbandmen, the manufacturers, the *shopkeepers*,* and miners of Armata, or in other words her People, had bent their bodies, and bathed their foreheads with the sweat of labour to furnish the supplies for this auxiliary force; they had a still nobler part to perform for the honour of their country—they were before-hand with the legions they had created, and finished at a single blow the mur-

* The author has only printed the word shopkeepers in *italics*, because Morven, from some reason or other, raised his voice when he pronounced it.

derous

derous contest which had been desolating our world.

"There is near us another island, in union with Armata, and forming with her one empire, which came in for her full proportion of this glory; the hardy sons of PATRICIA were in all our ranks, and her soil produced the immortal hero who conducted the battle.

"No victory in human annals ever produced results so sudden and extraordinary.—The adversary, whose ambition and whose boast had been our destruction—who had built a thousand vessels to convey his armies to our shores—and who was then erecting a column, *even within our view*, to be crowned with his colossal statue pointing at us with his finger for his own, now fled when no one was pursuing, and gave himself up as a prisoner to the commander of a single ship.

"Such a fate of so wonderful a being affords a con-

convincing proof that our *apparent* destinies may generally be referred to ourselves.—In the earliest and most flourishing periods of his astonishing career, he was *(in my opinion)* more sinned against than sinning, and even when he was pushing on his legions to the most distant territories, I was for a while in spirit on his side, because I thought there was a conspiracy of governments against him, inconsistent with the principles of our own.—Some have thought he was so weak as not to see that there was no security for his own sovereignty whilst the sovereigns combined against him had an unlimited power over the persons and resources of their subjects; but my belief is that he foresaw this danger though he upheld their governments, because he feared a worse in their subversion.—He had seated himself upon an imperial throne with a mock and servile representation, and trembled at the influence of free constitutions.—*This* was the rock on which he split.—If by politic and moral conventions when the sword was in his hand to enforce them, instead of by

a sys-

a system of oppression and subversion, he had balanced in their own states the princes who opposed him, giving an interest to their people to support him, he might have surrounded himself with grateful and independent nations, to have guarded and almost to have adored him; but he left them insulted, pillaged, degraded, and in the hands of their uncontrouled and justly incensed kings, who of course made use of them to destroy him.—They were *no longer* mercenary, reluctant armies, but nations embodied against their oppressors.

"From the moment I marked this base and senseless policy I foresaw his ruin, because he was now opposing the progression of a world which, in spite of all obstacles, will advance, because God has ordained it.

"It is a grand and useful example, when the ends of men who abuse mighty trusts are thus signally disastrous.—We see distinctly the Divine Providence superintending and judging us, and

when I visited Capetia whilst Armata was passing through her provinces in triumph, the evidence of it was *decisive*.—This mighty man, who had shaken the earth, collected all its spoils, and overwhelmed its dominions, was not to be seen or heard of even in his own capital, amidst the trophies of his universal conquests."

I was moved by this just description, and said to Morven, "that it reminded me of a passage in our Sacred Scriptures most divinely eloquent, and which, since the days of the Psalmist, had never been so strikingly illustrated:—

'*I myself have seen the ungodly in great power,*
'*and flourishing like a green bay-tree.—I passed*
'*by, and lo, he was gone.—I sought him, but his*
'*place was no where to be found.*'

"So prosperous a conclusion of a war so protracted and ruinous, was a fair and a national occasion of triumph to its authors and supporters; but

but giving them all just credit for honest intentions, and for their vigorous exertions, it is the office of impartial history to condemn them.—*They themselves* created the mighty antagonist.—Their mistaken counsels rendered his subjugation indispensable, and his dominion so powerful that it could not be overthrown without almost the ruin of their country.—Allowing them, even, *for argument's sake*, all the pre-eminence over their opponents they contend for, what would there be in the comparison to boast of? because supposing the storm to have been inevitable, and in the end to have been skilfully weathered by them, which of two pilots would you prefer?—him who, though he saw it gathering, sailed out into the midst of it, and though laden with *money* only escaped *by throwing overboard his cargo*, or the other who, seeing the tempest also, would have remained in the harbour till it was overblown?

" I have now brought you down from the earliest ages to the present times, and the history

is therefore finished; but one reflection presents itself too forcibly to be suppressed.

"To such a people as Armata victory ought to be no triumph but in its consequences.—She ought to consult the happiness of the nation that has been subdued, as faithfully as her own—she should hail the dawn of a representative government, the only antidote to despotism or revolution, and now that the evils of war have been terminated by her warlike exertions, her friendly influence should succeed them for the preservation of peace; but lest the fortunate close of this bloody æra should be confounded in future times with its unhappy commencement, she ought to blazon upon her national banners the auspicious principles of her own revolution—the guarantee to every people of the government of their own choice, whilst the independence of *other nations* shall be *reciprocally* respected.

CHAP-

CHAPTER X.

In which Morven relates to the Author the condition of Armata on the conclusion of the War, and asks his opinion and advice.

"WE are now arrived at a most interesting and painful conjuncture, to the particulars of which I must ask your utmost attention.—You have been cast upon the shores of the island, which has received you in a moment of great difficulty, and my father, as I have repeatedly told you, having always held up to me the English people as the great masters of political wisdom, I cannot but look to you for counsel in this arduous posture of our affairs.

"Not many months have passed since the glorious conclusion of the war whose history I have related, and up to that period, notwithstanding the immense sums expended in the contest, no sinew of the state appeared to be relaxed; no want was felt any where, and ad-

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ditional burthens, instead of appearing to oppress the people, were overshadowed by voluntary gifts; agriculture flourished beyond the experience of former times; and our manufactures, though struck at by hostile conspiracies against their very existence, monopolised the markets of the world.—Peace came at last, so often invoked as the source of every blessing; but how shall I find credit when I tell you that scarcely had she finished her dove-like flight, and alighted amongst us, amidst universal acclamations, when our prosperity vanished like an enchantment!—The landholders looked in vain to their most opulent tenants for their rents, and they in their turn, even if their rents were remitted, could barely maintain themselves on the soil; labourers and servants in husbandry were every where discharged, and thronged our roads seeking in vain throughout the land for employment, and with their children begging their bread.—The manufacturers, though they suffered less, being partly upheld by foreign markets, yet without home consumption, could not but languish,

languish, and money had every where disappeared.—In such a state of a nation it is needless to say that its revenue must suffer; yet the common remedy by an increased taxation must needs be desperate when the people are already sinking under their present burthens.—It is a maxim in the medical world, that many distempers may be said to be cured when their causes are ascertained; but the wisest men among us are lost in amazement, and I cannot therefore help pausing here, to ask you what course would be pursued by England if she were in similar distress?—what, I pray you, can be the source of this sudden prostration of our happy condition, *and what is the remedy?*"

"You have given me," I said, "no materials for answering your questions, and I must first put several to you; but perplex me no more by any appeals to England; my understanding is quite bewildered by referring to a state of things so dissimilar.

 "To

"To begin then the series of my inquiries, let me ask how much you have added to your public debt in the prosecution of your late glorious war, and what is now the proportion of the whole of it taken together to the tangible convertible property of your nation—or, to simplify my question by dividing it, what proportion does your debt bear to the precious metals, which with us, as with you, are accepted by all nations as the universal representative of wealth?" Morven could not help smiling at this first proposition, and answered, (in jest as I *at first* supposed,) that it had increased TEN FOLD, and amounted to more than all the precious metals that had been dug from the bowels of the earth since the discovery of the countries which contained them, and that if all nations were to empty into the treasury of Armata every coin in circulation amongst them, laying at her feet in bullion all that had been fashioned from gold or silver into vessels and utensils for luxury or use, tearing from the brows the diadems of all princes, and throwing down into the fur-

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nace the sacred images from the shrines of all temples throughout their whole planet, it would not perhaps be sufficient to extinguish the debt.

" But let me abandon this general description, which, though calculated to excite astonishment, is absurdly misapplied to a subject which requires the utmost possible precision.—I had forgotten also that I was speaking to a stranger from another world, who can know nothing of our mines and metals, or of their supposed productions and values; and having prepared myself besides to satisfy your inquiries, I can give you the whole account in your own English money, and unless this twin of your earth has been for some cause or other disinherited, and all the wealth bestowed by nature upon her brother, the figures of the accountant will even outstrip *my figures of speech*.

" To place the subject in the clearest point of view—the island of Armata, though shaken by

various

various revolutions, and though engaged in wars through many centuries, had nevertheless, on the accession of her present sovereign, a debt rather less than an hundred millions of your money, bearing an interest of about five millions; but from the expenses of the war with Hesperia and Capetia united, the country was delivered over to the charge of the minister I have already described to you, with a debt increased to the *immense amount* of *two hundred and sixty millions*, with an annual burthen of *thirteen millions*, speaking in your English money.

"Now I cannot surely be charged with leaning upon the memory of any man, however illustrious, when I assert that so *enormous a debt*, characterized too by so *rapid an increase*, ought to have inspired the utmost providence in the administration of our finances; neither can I hazard any censure which I shall at all regard, when I further assert, that if the popular council, having the uncontrouled dominion over the public

public wealth, had been itself more under the controul of the people *who were to sustain the burthens they laid upon them,* the debt would not probably, in so short a period, have reached this magnitude, much less have enabled me to tell you that *the same minister* left it swoln from the *two hundred and sixty millions* and upwards, which I gave you, to the sum of *five hundred and forty millions,* increasing the annual taxation before given you from *thirteen* to above THIRTY MILLIONS; which in the further prosecution of the war by his successors, and by the public councils *acting upon his system,* again swelled to the almost incredible amount of nearly *seven hundred millions,* still speaking in your English money.—Yet the most alarming part is still behind, in the increased expenditure, which, unless corrected, seems to mock all redemption.—The same minister found it only about twenty-one and left it nearly *sixty millions* ANNUALLY, and it has under his successors been still advancing.

"The *collateral* burthens, which all equally press upon the people, rose in the same proportion; and notwithstanding the universal boast of increasing prosperity, the same minister found the poor supported by rates not much exceeding the sum of *two millions*, but left it more than *five*, which afterwards increased under his successors to nearly *seven millions*, still speaking in your English money.

"But other evils must be added.—To produce an annual revenue of so vast an extent many taxes were resorted to of the most pernicious character, particularly affecting the administration of justice; and having thus closed the account of the taxes upon the living, I will conclude the subject with their dominion after death.

"The highest duty to government only twenty years ago, either on wills or on inheritances, amounted to only sixty pounds, but NOW (except when tne property vests in near relations or kindred)

dred) on the former it may amount to above *two hundred times* that sum, and on the latter to nearly *three hundred*, as the highest duty on the first may be *fifteen thousand*, and on the last above *twenty thousand pounds*, without taking into the account a proportion of the property transmitted, which in some cases amounts to a tenth.

"This is the most grievous of all our burthens.—The justest government may have occasion to resort to a moderate duty on alienations and transmissions of all descriptions of property, but it ought to advance with the most cautious and even trembling steps.—A mighty nation in its public character should scorn to sit like a vulture over departing breath.

"It may appear perhaps ungrateful to a country that embraced my beloved parents and myself in the hour of our peril and distress, that I should have exposed her difficulties in the manner I have done; but I appeal for my motives to the Great Searcher of hearts.—It is

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of the utmost importance that the public condition in all its details should be *universally known and understood.*—Ignorance can do no mischief if wisdom has materials to correct it, and evil-disposed persons are always most successfully resisted, when, though no facts are concealed or misrepresented, erroneous conclusions may be denied."

I expressed the utmost satisfaction at this just and honest declaration after an exposure sufficiently dismal; saying, "that I was well aware of the abundant wealth which might belong to a nation beyond the value of its universal representative, or even to a thousand times its amount.—Go on, then," I added, "that I may know your whole state, before I tell you what I think of it; and the next question which I shall therefore put to you is, what part of the substance of the people is taken by your government in the shape of direct taxes, or, of the indirect ones, arising from the increased prices of commodities which are taxed? and as it is

extremely

extremely difficult to arrive at the total amount of property in a great country, tell me, *in the rough*, putting it in English money that I may understand you, how much does your government *at an average* take from the subject out of every pound he possesses?"—"It is difficult," he said, "to answer that question, because taxation is unequal, and cannot possibly be equalized; but if resort could be had to an equal rate comprehending the aggregate of the various sources, I should say it amounted to one half at the least."

"I must further ask you, whether you have any other burthens upon property besides those which are directly levied by your government for the support of the state?"—"We have," said Morven, "the clergy and the poor.

"With regard to the former, though it is a heavy burthen, yet we suffer more in the *manner of its collection*, than in the amount.—The ministers who bring us the consolations of religion

religion ought to be regarded with reverence and affection.—It is a most evil policy to make the common orders of the people consider them as their oppressors.—They ought never to be *personally seen* in the demand of what is destined for their support.—Deductions from temporal advantages for the maintenance of spiritual comforts should be guarded as much as possible from being constantly felt, and little difficulty would attend an arrangement which would add dignity to the clergy without abridging their revenues, and improve their connection with the multitude they are to instruct.

" As to the support of *what is called* the poor, the amount of which I have already related, it has spread pauperism through all the middle classes of the community.—In the earlier periods of our history the burthen of maintaining them was scarcely felt, our ancient law confining it to the relief of 'the lame, the blind, and the 'impotent, and such others *amongst them* as were 'unable to work.'—Every principle of humanity demanded

demanded that support from those whom Providence had exempted from such severe infirmities; but every principle of sound policy opposed its further extension, and it was limited at first, in every district, to one-fortieth, which, speaking in your coin, would be only *sixpence in the pound;* but, by a strange departure from the principle of the original law, it now often exceeds forty times that amount, and in some places even the annual value of the property on which it professes to be a tax.—To be entitled to relief, it is no longer necessary that the applicant should bring himself within any of the descriptions of the ancient law; neither blindness, nor lameness, nor impotence, nor even inability to work, are necessary qualifications for support; large houses in every district being *now* built for the reception of almost *any body who chooses to go into them*, and from a prostration of morals it is no longer felt as a humiliation or a reproach; even they who, from their own improvidence, have contracted marriage though they knew themselves to be utterly

incapable of maintaining their children, have a claim to cast them upon the public as soon as they are born, and to live with them as inmates in those receptacles intended for the promotion of industry and the relief of want, but which, from the very nature of things, under the best management, become the abodes of vice and misery; where the aged, the diseased, the idle, and the profligate, the two first classes being everywhere out-numbered, are heaped upon one another, giving birth by their debaucheries to a new race of paupers, till they become "a kind of putrid mass above ground, corrupted themselves and corrupting all about them."—To finish the picture of abuse: this enormous and still growing burthen is almost exclusively cast upon the proprietors and occupiers of land, who ought least to be called upon to bear it, as neither their diseases nor their vices contribute in any kind of proportion to the aggregate of the poor.—The simplicity of a country life furnishes but a small contingent of either.—The vicious and the distempered

are

are hourly vomited forth from the mines and manufactories, where contaminating multitudes and unwholesome labour produce every disgusting variety of decrepitude and crime, yet neither the proprietors of those establishments, nor the capitalists who roll along the streets of our cities in splendid carriages, pay any thing like their proportions to the support of the idle and the unhealthy they have produced.—Almost the whole is cast upon the cultivators of the soil, who, except in the very houses I have described, supported by their property and labour, see nothing around them but innocence and health.

"Your questions," said Morven, "are now answered; and I burn with impatience to hear how England would deal with the evils I have stated."—I felt, I confess, rather hurt at this insulting reference to my beloved country, after what I had formerly said; but contented myself for the present with informing him that other questions yet remained.

 "How,"

"How," I asked, "after the return of peace, should there have been no markets for the farmer's produce?—Surely, in peace, as in war, your people must be fed?"

"The demands of government during war," he answered, "were *enormous*, and supplied by contracts at very high prices, to be sent beyond seas for the support of fleets and armies, and the inhabitants of countries which were the seats of war, besides the sustenance of immense numbers of prisoners at home.—On the cessation of hostilities this vast consumption not only suddenly stopped, but the tide turned against us, and great quantities of foreign corn were poured in from those very countries whose battles we had been fighting, not only with our blood but our treasure; so that remaining comparatively unburthened, they could raise every kind of grain at one-third of the expense which falls upon the Armatian farmer.—With this foreign grain of every description our markets now became glutted, whilst our own pro-

produce remained in our granaries unsold; because the importers could sell at a large profit, for a price which would scarcely pay the labour and taxes upon an Armatian farm."

"But where was your government all this while?"

"Our government," he answered, "was no otherwise in fault than in not being perhaps sufficiently on its guard to prevent the evil at the very first moment of the peace; and when at last it proceeded to pass a law to check importations, it had great difficulties to encounter; the multitude, who, in all nations, are honest and upright, but who, upon the most important occasions, are often quite incapable of understanding their own interests, became every where tumultuous, even to riot and rebellion, reasoning *(if it deserve the name)* that whatever had a tendency to raise the price of bread, without any reference to the causes of the then prices of grain, was an unjust and

 cruel

cruel disregard of the wants and sufferings of the poor, but their ignorance was soon proved by the event.—When the foreign corn was selling cheap in our markets, whilst that of their own country remained in the barns undisposed of, bread was undoubtedly cheaper, *but they had then no money to buy it with however cheap*, because their masters could no longer employ them, and they were every where discharged.—When grain fetched an encouraging price to the growers, they were all employed, and wages of course rose in proportion to the value of their labour to their employers; but when, from the sale of foreign corn in all the markets, it sunk below any profit from home cultivation, bread, as I have just told you, became cheaper, but the clamourers had no bread at all.—A cheap loaf was but a sorry sight to those who had only to look at it.—The kingdom therefore presented every where a face of the utmost distress; nor is the law which even now regulates importations by any means sufficiently protective, because that which was intended to be the lowest price

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in our markets became generally the highest, a consequence foretold in our public councils when the law was in progress, by one of the ablest men in our country.—The law indeed would be sufficiently protective, if, when the ports were open under it, our markets were only refreshed by the fair commerce of foreign countries until they fell again below the importing standard; but that is by no means the case: the importations are not made by foreigners, but by capitalists amongst ourselves, who having money enough to stand the losses of unsuccessful speculations, can bring in their corn at the most favourable times, and being allowed to warehouse without duties, have their granaries always full, when the law enables them to sell; which suddenly throws down the markets, to the ruin of our agricultural classes.

"But the mistaken notion, which crippled the law in its formation, was very soon exposed. When the ruined farmers had in many places discharged their labourers, and throughout the

whole country had reduced their establishments, the unemployed with their children fell of course upon the public; and the manufacturers and traders, whose customers now filled our poor-houses and our prisons, found out at last that God has so fashioned the world, that all his creatures must flourish or decay together.

"Another evil of almost equal magnitude overhangs us.—We have a creature called the *bletur*, which is not only the perfection of animal food, but whose covering, given it by nature, becomes when manufactured our own also, and for many ages has been the pride and wealth of our country.—Would you then believe, that though other nations produce the same animals, at such an inferior price, from their climates and untaxed conditions, as to render all competition ridiculous; yet this raw material is suffered to be imported and worked up here, whilst the breeders of Armata can scarcely pay their shepherds for the care of their flocks, and are every

where

where breaking up their farms, even in those parts of the island proverbially famous for their propagation ?"

I could not here help interrupting again, by asking—" Where was your government all this while?—or rather perhaps I should ask, have you any government at all ?"—" Certainly," he answered, " we have, and one that is justly the envy of our world; but nothing is perfect.—The matter was lately brought before the great council, and was passed over without redress; but you must not be hasty in judging of the national character from such a seemingly absurd determination.—The great council is composed of men far superior, from talents and information, to those of any other country, but who are now and then obliged to suffer their own good sense to be overshadowed by the *nonsense* of others; they are not chosen equally by the various classes of an intelligent people, but are got together in such a manner that local interests and local prejudices sometimes prevail

prevail over the opinions of enlightened statesmen.—If you had understood our language, it would have amused you to have been present at their debate.—The greater number said that they would not depart from an ancient policy of free importation, under which the country had so long flourished, and I have no doubt they believed they were pursuing its best interests; but they probably never looked into an account—they knew nothing of the immense and alarming *increase* of the importations complained of, nor their former proportions at different periods to the home growth, nor the effect of this increase upon the staple of the country, nor did they consider whether our own bleturs might not be brought by proper encouragements to a higher, perhaps to a perfection equal with those of any other country, so as in time to supply most of our manufactures at as cheap a rate, preserving within ourselves the immense sums annually drained from us by purchasing *abroad* what we might produce at *home*. When this improvident conclusion of the

the select body was brought before the whole council, they, without further examination, confirmed it; and then, as innocently as the bleturs which were the subjects of their decision, went out of the fold in which they had been penned to scatter themselves over the capital, where I will very soon carry you to see them."

"Have you now," said Morven, "any other questions to propose?—I am impatient to hear your opinions."

"Others yet remain.

"Is there any fixed interest of money amongst you? and, if there be, are there any means by which avarice and chicanery can successfully evade the law which creates the limitation?"—"There are," he replied, "and to such an extent as to render it difficult, if not impossible, for men possessed of the clearest and most unburthened property to borrow the smallest sums for the improvement of their estates."

"In

" In what state are your manufactures?—Are your people equally industrious as formerly, and are they equal to other nations in the ingenious arts?"

" As much beyond them," he answered, " as the sun outshines the smallest star that only twinkles when he has set. There are some arts, perhaps, in which, as we do not prize them so highly as others, we may be inferior; but in all the great improvements of the higher, which assist human labour, and which can only be brought to perfection by the deepest knowledge of chemistry and mechanics, we have no equals, nor can ever, I believe, be rivalled. There is a force and robustness, if I may so express myself, in the natives of Armata, as if they were of a different species from the ordinary race of men."

" I rejoice to hear it—one question then only remains—

" Have you fisheries?—Are your seas prolific, and

and are the fish directed by a mysterious instinct, as in our world, to visit periodically the coasts of the ocean, as if brought thither by the Divine command for the sustentation of man?"

"You seem," answered my friend, "to have been describing *this country* in adverting to *your own.* The fish of this planet are prolific beyond all other creatures, and are bound, as with you, to an appointed course. The finger of God, visible as it is throughout all his works, seems here to be more distinct and manifest; pointing with a benevolent clearness to this inexhaustible source of food. The supply has been always a great national object, *but improvement has not reached its height*, and never can reach it whilst a most improvident and enormous duty upon salt, amounting to thirty times and upwards of the value of the commodity, is suffered to remain as it is at present regulated by our laws."

CHAPTER IX.

In which the Author begins to deliver his opinion concerning the state of Armata, and the remedies for the difficulties which Morven had related.

"You shall now then," I said, "be possessed of my opinions—I have little, indeed, to communicate, having only in a manner to give you back what is your own. Your answers to my various inquiries have been so enlightened, that I can hardly mistake the condition of your country, but its novelty *throughout* has perplexed me. The remedies, though they may be difficult in the application, are in their principles obvious and simple.

"Your government, according to your own admission, had long ago absorbed a much larger proportion of the public wealth than can possibly be consistent with the prosperity, I had almost said with the existence of any state.

And

And no ordinary cause of war—nothing, indeed, short of self protection from an invading force could have justified the launching out into such a wasteful system of expenditure, as to have increased ten-fold in less than thirty years the burthen of ten centuries." "We had no choice," said Morven, interrupting me, "after the short opportunity I pointed out to you had passed; we sought to avoid war, but it was fastened upon us."

"I am in no condition," I answered, "to dispute with you upon facts; but your adversaries were in the phrenzy of a sanguinary revolution, and were more likely to destroy themselves than to injure others.—You should therefore have exerted your influence with other governments to leave them unmolested; and if, by a firm and faithful combination, some safe direction could not be given to so inflamed and dangerous a people, all nations should have stood aloof from them as from the mouth of a volcano, attaching their own subjects by wise and indul-

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gent councils, increasing *for the time* their military establishments, and keeping within their own territories in a state of impregnable defence.

" But supposing the views of other nations to have been different, or that differing from yours in opinion, your mediation had been rejected, you were completely independent of them all, and as far therefore as your own country was concerned *nothing ought to have removed you from a system of defence.* You are an island with immense naval and military strength. Within yourselves you were secure—and you ought not, though you were involved in war, to have carried it beyond your own limits.—A contrary system could not have been contemplated by men of common discretion without foreseeing a ruinous expense; but nothing seems to have occurred to your most sagacious financiers beyond the simple question of the competency of the *new* taxes to pay the interest of *additional* loans; their bearings upon the springs of national industry and prosperous commerce

appear

appear to have been wholly overlooked, except in the closets of a few speculative writers who foresaw the ruin of the system, but miscalculated its period, from not taking into account the almost incredible energies of your extraordinary people. This was a great evil; because when the æra of their prophecies had passed away, it operated as a kind of license for unbounded profusion. Œconomists were of course discountenanced, and jobbers of every description encouraged in a triumphant cry against factious predictions, until it seems to have become a received or rather an unquestionable axiom amongst you, that no debt which figures could extend to denominate would ever affect the invulnerable and immortal Armata; since, contrary to the experience of our jockeys in England, the more weight she had carried the greater had been her speed. That this bubble did not burst whilst hostilities continued may easily be accounted for.—Whilst your government was the universal paymaster, your forges resounded night and day, your looms were incessantly

plied, and your warehouses for manufactures and natural productions were almost hourly emptied and replenished; high prices and prompt payments were considered as symbols of the most permanent prosperity, and the just pride of national glory confirmed *the delusion*:—*well may it be called delusion!* because the traffic which you imagined had enriched you was carried on with your own capitals, and every article purchased was paid for with your own money. Individual sellers were, no doubt, often more than compensated for their proportions of what *all of you* were to discharge, but *the community* of course became poor in the proportion of the amount expended, since the amount expended was their own. When peace therefore came, which had been so long and so anxiously looked for, markets of every description and the prices of all commodities became comparatively nothing, whilst the people were bent to the earth by the interest of the money borrowed to pay for the goods which had been sold. Your great purchaser was, no doubt, most liberal and punctual

punctual in his payments, but they could only be made by his putting his hand into your own pockets. It is folly to say, that the public debt of a nation is nothing, being only owing from the community *at large* to a *part* of it, and so returning in a circle; likening it to money due from members of the same family to one another, which, it was said, would leave the family just the same as if no such loans amongst themselves had existed. There might be some colour for this comparison if the whole population were public creditors in equal proportions; but what would become of the argument, if the lenders were not more than a twelfth part of the people, and if those who, when the taxes were brought back by government into circulation, received any part of them for services or from favour were but another twelfth part of them?—could it, *in such a case,* be maintained as a grave argument that the five-sixths of the public, paying the same as individuals, but receiving nothing in return for their equal contributions, were yet on a footing of equality with others

who were more than indemnified, and even with those who had been enriched? or could it be hazarded as doctrine by any political œconomist, that a nation so circumstanced could be equally powerful or prosperous, or its inhabitants equally happy as if the public wealth flowed in a natural current through all the various classes of the civilized world? Such sophistry might well pass current in England, where nobody has an interest in questioning it, because our debt is too insignificant to raise up antagonists to oppose it; but if we had seventy millions to pay annually, a sum more than half the rental of our whole kingdom, and if only three or four millions of our people, out of our whole great population, received any part of it back again, but remained in a comparative state of poverty and exclusion, the air would ring with exclamations against the propagation of an error so palpably dangerous and destructive.

"It cannot, indeed, be better exposed, since it should only be met by ridicule, than by telling you

you of a loss which I personally suffered before I left England, and for which I was not a little laughed at amongst my acquaintance—

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" I happened to go, after a theatrical representation in London, to a general rendezvous for refreshment in the neighbourhood of the play-house: whilst I was at supper, there came into my box a person in a state of great agitation and distress.—His appearance bespoke the utmost poverty, and I was therefore not a little surprized to see him pull out of his pocket a time-piece, of great beauty, set round with precious stones, which he offered to sell me just at any price I would set upon it, adding, that nothing but finding an immediate purchaser could save himself and an infant family from destruction. I excused myself, by saying, that I hoped he would not think I meant to insult him by any suspicion of his honesty, but that common prudence, as well as justice to others, inspired a reasonable restraint in such a case upon the most charitable feelings.

 I told

I told him, however, giving him at the same time my address, that what he asked for was at his service, but not as the price of his watch, which should be re-delivered on the re-payment of the money. He seemed greatly affected by my proposal, returned me a thousand thanks, pressed my hands between his, and turning aside, as if to conceal his tears, retired with the bank notes I had given him. On returning home I shewed the watch to my family, taking not a little credit for having refused so advantageous a bargain, saying it must be, at least, of equal value with my own, which had cost me five times the money. I now put my hand into my pocket to make the comparison, but found I had it not. To cut the matter short, which you no doubt already anticipate, *it was my own watch I had paid for*, which this ingenious stranger had deprived me of in the playhouse, and sold to me as his." Seeing my friend almost convulsed with laughter, I could not help saying to him, "Laughable as it may be, it is scarcely an exaggeration of the account

you have been giving me of your country during your late war, and if you understood Latin I would say to you—

De te fabula narratur.

"The true way of estimating the disastrous consequences of your present taxation, is to figure to yourself (if you can bear the reflection) the sensation it would *at this moment* produce, if some new and unexpected source of annual revenue were to start up to the amount of *twenty millions of your money.*—Would it not in your present condition be like a resurrection from the dead?—Yet in this *one reign* you have created a *perpetual burthen* of nearly twice that sum. Could volumes so strikingly detail the effect of this worst of evils?

"The cause of your distress is therefore the clearest imaginable.—Your government collects in taxes so large a proportion of your property, that the rest is not sufficient to support your people; in such a case it is a mistake to complain

plain of the want of a circulating medium as an *accidental* and *temporary* cause of your difficulties, capable of being removed by politic contrivances. We have a vulgar saying in England, that you can have *no more of a cat than his skin;* and if out of twenty shillings, not less than ten are consumed by government and by collateral burthens, ten only can remain *in real and substantial circulation;* the scarcity of money may be lamented, and ingenious devices may be held out as remedies, but without a *radical system of improvement*, rendering property more productive, and trade more prosperous, what danger can be greater than opportunities of borrowing, when there are no means of repaying what is borrowed? —If land, from having sunk below its former rental, is mortgaged to more than half its value, would it be any thing like an advantage to the proprietor to find out *even a fair lender*, who would advance him money on the remaining part? since, without *some means of improvement*, his estate in the end must infallibly be sold.

"The

"The same consequences apply equally to communities as to individuals, and there is therefore no safety for Armata, but, *first*, in the wisdom of her government, and in the energies of her people, to raise the value of every species of property, *by the almost infinite ways within their reach;* and *secondly*, by the immediate reduction of her expenditure to square with her revenue, as far as can be made consistent with the public safety and the principles of national justice.

" A great orator in our ancient world, when asked what was the *first*, and the *second*, and the *third* perfection of eloquence, still answered ACTION, not to exclude other perfections but to mark its superior importance; so *I*, who am no orator at all, but a plain man, speaking plainly of the policy of an exhausted country, must say that your *first*, and your *second*, and your *third* duty, is RETRENCHMENT, meaning, as the rhetorician, not that it is your *whole* duty, but only that its *pre-eminence* may be felt.

" I am aware of the great difficulties which must attend a satisfactory execution of this momentous trust, but after what you have related of Armata, *I cannot doubt the result.*—On the contrary, a severe and unexampled pressure may open men's eyes to their real condition, and give such a simultaneous impulse to your government and people, as to make them act harmoniously and firmly, in devising and submitting to the measures necessary for the redemption of your affairs.

" In this grand process of restoration, it is of the first importance that the public mind should not take *a wrong direction*, looking for savings which in the aggregate would be *as nothing*, whilst principles of justice, which *are every thing*, were disregarded.—Your retrenchments must not have the character of confiscations nor of revolutionary heat, and the different classes of your people, so happily blended as to have a common interest, must not be set at variance.—No justice can be done where irritation

tation prevails, and in England therefore no court is permitted to sit in judgment, unless they who are to pronounce it are dispassionate and unbiassed.—I can see no distinction between the members of a community in a great crisis of its affairs—when a ship is in distress *all on board* must take their turns at the pump?—The public creditor undoubtedly lends his money upon the faith of the whole nation, pledged through its government to a stipulated return, and it is a MOST SACRED PLEDGE; but the landholder improves *his property* upon the SAME FAITH, that he shall enjoy its profits, subject only to an *equal* burthen *upon all*.—What colour then is there for saying, that, if that revenue were to fall short to which the public creditor looked when he lent his money, the deficiency should be made up to him by DISPROPORTIONATE *burthens* upon *lands* on which he had no mortgage, nor their proprietors any special benefit from the loans?

" Neither—and for the same reasons—ought

you

you to lay *disproportionate* burthens upon the profits of any manufactures or ingenious arts, begun in any *given state of your country*, that you may keep what is termed good faith with a very limited number of your subjects.—Every just government, however, must proceed in extreme or in new cases with the utmost caution, taking care that no principle is adopted which works *a wrong*, however small in the particular instance it may appear, because it opens a door to *other wrongs*, the extent of which cannot be known, and saps the very foundations of the social contract.—The true course to be pursued is, after all, most difficult in the details, though the principles, as I have said, are clear; since with every qualification of wisdom and justice in those who may have to act, or of fortitude and patience in those who are to suffer, differences of opinion must always attend any sudden and cutting reforms in great national establishments, both as to the extent of reductions and the seasons for their accomplishment.—Every class will feel most

acutely for itself, and it is difficult to be a righteous judge in our own cause.—This prejudice may even extend to cases where there can be no approach to self-interest, and it may perhaps most powerfully affect my own judgment at this moment, when I am discussing the policy of another world.—The first object of retrenchment after the general peace you have described, ought undoubtedly, *to some extent or other*, to be the reduction of your naval and military forces; because their services are no longer necessary for your safety; but they may *again be necessary*, and the utmost skill and caution are therefore required to preserve their *fabric* and *constitution*, when you diminish their extent.—The condition also of many who have so nobly served you, is a subject *I almost weep to think on.*—It should be remembered, that those brave men have been for years together in most perilous and unwholesome stations; that their pay could not be sufficient to support them, and in many cases their families also,—left behind them, oppressed with

poverty

poverty and the wretchedness of separation.—It is surely, therefore, an intemperate spirit that would drown the acclamations of joy for victories purchased with their blood, by a clamour to dismiss them, *at once*, to hopeless misery.—A reduction you must nevertheless make, since an unusual pressure demands it, but let not their cause be prejudiced by imaginary dangers to your civil government, which, *with one stroke of a pen*, can sweep away their very name and existence.—Be firm, then, in your purpose to lop off all burthens which lean without necessity upon your revenues, but be *gentle and considerate* in the process; softening, as far as possible, the severe privations which duty may compel you to inflict.

"Let me deceive you however in nothing.—I am no authority on this part of your case.—I was bred to arms from my earliest youth in my own world, and feel such an enthusiasm in every thing that regards the naval or military professions, that if the subject had arisen with us, and

and I had been placed in our public councils, I should probably have differed in opinion from those with whom I differ in nothing else."

CHAP-

CHAPTER XII.

In which the Author continues to deliver his Opinion upon the State and Condition of Armata.

"ANOTHER momentous duty now presents itself, and of a more pleasant character.—Whilst you are reducing your expenditure, every effort ought to be made, and, if possible, without the aid of new burthens, to regenerate the public estate, which neither in its value nor in any of its resources, has nearly reached its height.—From an inhabitant of another world you cannot expect details; but, founding myself upon your own statements, I will point out some manifest errors in your system, and advert to the most obvious remedies:

"In the first place, then, to enable a state to collect a great and *direct* revenue from the property of the people, it ought to be a grand object to make all *collateral burthens* press upon them

them as lightly as possible by the most refined policy in the administrations of all inferior departments, and to suffer no abuses whatsoever to prevail in them: this is not the work of a day, but of painful and long-continued labour in the legislative body, and throughout all the magistracies of the country.

"That this duty has been wholly lost sight of in a most vital part of your concerns, you have yourself admitted and lamented.—Nothing indeed can be so extravagantly absurd and preposterous as the management or rather THE CREATION of your poor, by which your government suffers to escape from it, (without any relief to its subjects, but on the contrary oppressing and corrupting them,) an annual revenue of nearly half your general taxes when your late war began, since you have stated that above seven millions are every year collected on that account.—To advise you, *in this case*, requires no local knowledge; an inhabitant of the moon, dropped down from it upon your surface, would,

in the very next moment, be fully qualified to condemn the absurd and disgraceful system of your laws.—It was an insult, (though I am sure not intended,) to ask me what ENGLAND would do in a condition to which she never can be reduced.—ENGLAND would never have permitted her houses of charity, if a mistaken policy had erected them, to be converted into the haunts of vagabonds and prostitutes to knot and gender in, throwing the whole burthen of their debaucheries upon the industrious classes of her people—ENGLAND would laugh to scorn the laboured system of folly you have described, bringing no comfort to the necessitous, whilst it swallows up, in many instances, the entire property on which it professes to be a tax—ENGLAND, instead of setting up courts throughout the whole country to play at foot-ball with the unhappy, whom she meant to protect, driving them to and fro from one part of the kingdom to the other—ENGLAND would begin by confining public charity to those who were real objects of charitable support; and, wise in all

all her regulations, would then enact a system of equal and local contribution from all who, from *any source of property or industry*, could spare it; a contribution which the wealthy would not feel, and which would be felt even by the lowest orders not as a burthen, but as a protection from ever being themselves the objects of a degrading and corrupting relief.—Those mischievous receptacles of vice and misery, which you so justly and feelingly reprobated, would then be everywhere rased to the foundations; the poor would be restored to their domestic comforts, and contributing millions to an useless and devouring taxation, would be enabled to relieve the public as they became themselves relieved.—When by such a new system of laws, as wise and protective as the present is absurd and oppressive, the mites of almost the poorest came to be dropped into the boxes of so blessed an institution throughout every district in your country, pauperism would soon entirely disappear.—It often indeed exists in its most wretched and degraded forms, when

what can be saved amongst the lower classes, instead of being deposited *weekly*, for their own benefit, is consumed *nightly*, in haunts where liquid fire is prepared for them, utterly destroying their constitutions, and disqualifying them from all the duties of good husbands, or fathers, or subjects, not one of which an habitual drunkard was ever yet qualified to fulfil.

" But the subject of your pauperism is far from being finished.—Humanity cannot pronounce that the poor shall receive no alms when they can work, *if there be no work for them*.—Every thing therefore you have said regarding those oppressive burthens, in the whole of which I have just concurred with you, must go completely for nothing, and be without any possible remedy until this radical and destructive defect in your present condition is removed.

" Your laws for the support of the poor were made in a *sound* and *wholesome* state of your country, when it was a just *legal presumption*,

tion, that every man who was able and willing to work might find employment; but that is *not the case now*, and the evil may be most distinctly traced to your great taxation, and to an erroneous policy, which, by depressing agriculture, has depressed every thing else.—To use the words of a great poet of England, 'We track the felon home.'—This most important subject lies within the narrowest compass, and may be summed up in a word.—Indeed, you have almost exhausted it yourself, and I have little that is my own to offer.

" The mischief began in the mistaken system you adopted for the importation of foreign grain; but however your government might have been perplexed and almost overborne on the first consideration of the subject, I cannot anticipate that it will suffer such a monstrous evil to continue.—It must surely see that the profits of a few importing merchants, engaged in speculations of this description, can never circulate with the same advantage as if the same

 capital

capital were flowing in various channels as a kind of *irrigation* of wealth through every nook and corner of your island, giving *universal* spirit to agriculture, and employment to millions who must become national burthens when it declines.

"You will now, of course, ask for *the remedies*, which appear to me as obvious as the evils to which they are to be applied.—You must not expect that remedial effects can be sudden, when the causes of your difficulties are considered; but if they are wisely adopted and firmly persevered in, I WILL WARRANT THE RESULT.

"The SOIL, then, of every country, and the bringing to the *utmost perfection* its various productions, are the foundations of all wealth and prosperity.—You might as well hope to see the human body in active motion when palsy had reached the heart, or a tree flourishing after its roots were decayed, as expect to see manufactures, or arts, or industry of any description

pro-

progressive, when *agriculture* has declined.—In an island like Armata, where the earth and the climate are so propitious, no man ought to be able to set his foot upon the ground, except upon the public roads, or the streets of cities, without treading upon human sustenance; and it ought to be a fundamental policy to bring your *entire surface* into the best considered use by prudent and appropriate cultivation.—Well directed bounties, and skilful relaxations of your imposts where they press too severely, might still accomplish this object; and the unnatural state of your country for so long a period most imperiously demands the attempt; as, without some immediate exertion, thousands, perhaps millions of acres, will soon fall back into the desart more rapidly than they were reclaimed.

"This retrogression of agriculture would be portentous, if the causes were not obvious.—The lands I principally speak of were not brought into cultivation by a natural course of

husbandry, but were *forced* into production at an expense that your markets during war could only repay; and the utmost exertion of unprotected proprietors can never, I fear, redeem them from the consequences of such an improvident course—the State alone can save them, and the public loss will otherwise be ten-fold the amount of the greatest sacrifice which need be made to prevent returning barrenness from desolating your land.

" It is not MONEY that government could be asked for, but, as I have just said, the skilful management of revenue, and an unremitting attention in her legislature to the *smaller* springs of national œconomy, which are not examined or thought of when the body politic is in a rude state of health,—the science of agriculture is by no means at its height; and in the almost miraculous advance of chemistry, new means may be found, from the concentration of known composts and the discovery of new, to lessen the cost of culture, and to increase its returns.—But here

again

again your revenue stalks like a ghost across my path whichever way I turn; as otherwise you have a superior unbounded source of improvement trodden under your very feet, and cast as refuse into your rivers, beyond all that chemistry is ever likely to discover.—You have *salt*, you say, in endless abundance, but your *necessity* turns it into *money*, even to forty times its value, instead of spreading it abroad for various uses, to rise up in property which no money could purchase.—After thus taxing to the very bone this life's blood of your people, why, to be consistent, do you not bind up by law their veins and arteries to prevent circulation?—Do you know what salt alone would do for you if it were not seized upon as revenue and clung to perhaps as a plank which you cannot quit in your distress?—I will speak of its *other* uses hereafter; but can you be so ignorant as not to know, that by taking the tax upon it *directly as money*, you rob yourselves of fifty times its amount in the productions of your soil, in your fisheries and manufac-

tures,

tures, and in the universal prosperity of the country?

"LIME, which has caused to start into life the most inert and sterile parts of Great Britain, is just nothing as a manure when compared with salt, which differs from it, besides, in two remarkable qualities, decisive of its superior value.—Lime, and I believe all other known composts, are powerful only according to the quantities in which they are used, whereas salt, to be useful, must be sparingly employed; it *corrupts* vegetable substances when mixed with them in *small quantities*, but *preserves* them when it *predominates in the mass.*—It is needless therefore to add, that independently of its comparative lightness, the expense both of the article and its carriage must be very greatly diminished. Yet you rob the mother of your people of this food which indulgent nature has cast into her lap, sufficient, as you will see hereafter, to feed all her children, even if their numbers were doubled.

"Nothing

" Nothing indeed can so clearly expose the infinite danger of public profusion, as the necessity it imposes upon almost all governments, of direct taxation upon articles of universal and indispensable consumption: such revenues are undoubtedly always *great*, and, in moderation, are therefore the best; but when they are pushed beyond the mark, which an enlightened view of the whole concerns of a country would make manifest to a great statesman, the advantages obtained are countervailed and become nothing; because they dry up other sources of wealth and improvement which would carry even greater burthens, whilst the national prosperity was preserved.

" To continue this momentous subject, be assured that the very being of your country, *above all at this moment*, depends upon your making *your own soil* support your most extended population, and that to consider population as an evil, is to be wiser than God, who, in your earth as in mine, commanded man to increase

crease and multiply, and who, I am persuaded, throughout all creation, has ordained that nothing should go backward or stand still.

"If there were no other proof of the pre-eminence of agriculture, let it be remembered that it is the greatest source of labour, and in a proportion little understood, because it not only comprehends the direct and immediate labour upon its surface and in its bowels, but the labour also of various arts and manufactures, whose raw materials it produces.—LABOUR, indeed, is the salt of the earth, the preserver and nourisher of all things—the curse that man should eat his bread with the sweat of his brow, was mercifully repealed in the very moment it was pronounced, and was changed even into a blessing—Labour gave him bread, and a comfort along with it, which nothing like labour can bestow. If the earth produced spontaneously, it might be a paradise for angels, but no habitation for beings formed like ourselves; without labour, what could support or adorn the whole fabric

of

of society?—It would vanish like an enchantment.

"The curse of DEATH was also revoked, not only by the promise of immortal life hereafter, but to deliver man at the very moment from the barrenness of the earth that was cursed.—Without death, he might have toiled and sweated, but the ground would have yielded nothing; death therefore was ordained to revolve with life in a mysterious and fructifying circle.—The corruption of all created things returning into the bosom of nature, brings them back again to reward the industry of man. Every animal that dies; all vegetables, and they have lives also, every substance which dissolves and becomes offensive, every heterogeneous mixture, which upon the surface would stagnate and become malignant, brought back by human wisdom into their allotted stations, become the future parents of a renovated world.

"Can we suppose then that God has performed

formed those stupendous miracles for nothing? When our Scripture tells us that man was formed from the dust of the earth, it should not perhaps be taken in a sense *too literal*—to the Almighty, matter was not necessary for his creation, though his frame was to be *material*—it may mean that he could live only by the earth, and was to return to it after death.

"The first national object then is to FEED your own people, AND TO FIND EMPLOYMENT FOR THEM ALL. On such a subject you cannot expect details, nor can you need them.—In a country whose splendid history you have passed along like a kind of fairy tale before me, your means must be infinite.—You have not only the richest and most various surface to work upon, but subterranean treasures, inexhaustible and unequalled; you have still to make new roads and railways, and canals, and facilities of yet undiscovered descriptions, for the transport of their productions, which should over-spread your soil as if there were a net-work thrown over it.—The car-

riage

riage of manure, of materials for building, and of all articles of traffic, or provisions, are heavy taxes upon the raw materials, and by every possible means should be diminished; an observation equally applying to every species of human labour, whether employed upon the earth or in arts and manufactures, which should be curtailed and lessened not only by the utmost stretch of accidental inventions, but should be drawn out and rewarded and consecrated by the state.

"This may be thought a paradox whilst the poor are calling out every where for employment; but be assured no greater delusion ever existed than that the matchless ingenuity of your people, in the construction of mechanical aids, can in any possible instance be an evil. I was shocked, indeed, to hear of outrages, which I should have expected only to have existed amongst the very dregs of a civilized people. The mistaken or rather the *delirious* incitement; is when numbers are unemployed; but how many more would be without employment,

ment, or rather how many thousands, and tens and hundreds of thousands would be starving, if the machinery they attack were overthrown? In the present condition of your country you could not send a single bale of your manufactures into a foreign market, if they were to be worked up only by manual labour, and *then* not only the turbulent destroyers, but the most diligent of your people must perish. Having been blessed with religious parents, my mind was directed, from my earliest youth, to contemplate the benevolent dispensations of an offended God; and in nothing have they inspired a more constant and grateful admiration than that when the first and greatest of his works had been cast down for disobedience into the most forlorn and helpless condition, he should not only be gifted to subdue to his use and dominion all inferior things, but that, fashioned after the image of Heaven, he should be enabled to scan its most distant worlds, and to augment his own strength in mitigation of his appointed labour, by engines so tremendously powerful as would crush, with a sin-

a single stroke, his weak frame to atoms, whilst they form, under his directing skill, the smallest and most delicate things for the uses and ornaments of the world.

" You must beat down those insane outrages by the whole strength and vigour of your laws. Select the *guiltiest* for condign punishment; *but let no such guilt be spared.*"

Morven here expressed his highest satisfaction. Taking me by the hand, he assured me that the very *existence* of Armata depended upon the most unremitting execution of the laws in this respect; and I was glad to find that her government had acted with the greatest promptitude and firmness in stigmatizing and punishing this opprobrium of a civilized world.

As I was preparing to finish the little I had to say to him, he desired we might pause a moment, that what had been *last* said might be the better remembered; and opening the door, which led

to the adjoining apartment, I found a supper of twelve covers prepared for us, and a mixed company of men and women, apparently most accomplished; but being then an utter stranger to the language, I shall postpone all my observations upon Armatian society till I have to speak hereafter of the manners and amusements of the capital; yet I cannot pass over that the women I saw were most beautiful, several of them singing delightfully, and that, from their address and manner of speaking, it was well, perhaps, for my repose, that I could not understand what they said.—The reader, indeed, will have to condole with me *hereafter* that I ever became more susceptible.

CHAP.

CHAPTER XIII.

In which the Author concludes his Opinion upon the State and Condition of Armata.

WHEN Morven visited me next morning, he expressed his impatience to hear what had been left unfinished the night before; and I then proceeded as follows:—

"The more I reflect upon every part of your statement, the more I am convinced that a grand system of well directed industry, supported at once by your government and people, would give an entire new face to your country; but it cannot be even begun without re-casting the laws which regulate the importations of what your own soil could produce. I am sensible that this subject is complicated in the details, and that I cannot be qualified to deal with them; but a SOUND PRINCIPLE gives a sure direction throughout all the branches of

political œconomy. Until you come into the full enjoyment of what wisdom is sure to bestow, you must, of course, have temporary arrangements according to circumstances, that provisions may be always obtained at *steady* and *reasonable* rates; but, *in the meantime*, your undoubted policy is UNIVERSAL CULTIVATION, and when that is accomplished, or so far advanced as to feed your people, not a blade or seed, or grain of any description ought to be permitted to enter the ports of your country, *times of famine or scarcity excepted;* and even then the quantity should be measured by the decision of some high and responsible tribunal, to secure unfluctuating prices, not so *high* as to distress the poor, nor so *low* as to throw them out of bread, when the landholders, who employ them, are undersold by general and jobbing importations.

"To speak plainly—It is my clear opinion that this cannot be accomplished in the present state of things, except by *protecting duties*, which

which should be so regulated as to ensure importation, without enabling it to overpower the agriculture of your own country.

"It would be speaking at random to be more particular in concerns so new to me, but the principle is universal. Importations of natural productions may *occasionally* be politic, because manufactures are often taken in return; but advantages may be purchased *too dearly*, and no price can be more ruinous than when foreign harvests have an injurious interference with the natural productions of any nation.

"To avoid this evil, affecting alike manufactures and agriculture, *protecting duties* have been constantly resorted to by all governments, and I cannot even conceive the danger of adopting them upon the present occasion, nor the difficulty of settling their amounts.—After fixing a proper standard, you might *then* keep up your present warehousing system, that you might always have a supply; securing to the

 importer

importer a fair prospect of profit, without which he would not import, but still keeping him in subordination to your own cultivators, without which your own soil will infallibly be neglected.—This system, however, need be but temporary, like parental duties towards an infant until his growth and strength are completed; because, to say that notwithstanding the most politic protections and bounties, such a country as you have described to me will be found unequal *in the end* to the support of its own population, or that provisions are likely to be dearer in proportion as your whole surface is brought into well-directed cultivation, are propositions which no man in England, who dreaded the restraints of a mad-house, would venture to advance.

" Anticipating, therefore, that a more protective system will now be speedily adopted, I may revert with some hope to the condition of your poor. When agriculture shall have revived, and with it the labour which is inseparable from its prosperity, the ancient *legal presumption*,

presumption, that men who can work may find employment, will revive also; and you may *then,* without inhumanity or injustice act up to, or even re-enact your ancient laws which limit the objects of relief to those whose activities from age, or from disease, or in short from any disabling infirmities have been destroyed. I know nothing, of course, of your various districts or of the burthens imposed upon them, but I should not be at all surprized if, from the very evils we have been discussing, the rates should be found to be greater in the agricultural than in the manufacturing departments; because your husbandmen and country servants, of all descriptions, when employed upon lower wages or discharged from employment, would fall of course as burthens upon the places where their families were settled; but on the renovation of agriculture the very reverse of this would immediately succeed, and the rates in these places would not only be the lowest, but would lead to universal reductions, because, as labour increased and extended, wages would extend

and increase in proportion, the whole of which would circulate amongst your manufacturers and traders, who lost their best customers when agriculture declined.

" You are not, perhaps, aware of the proportional ascendancy of land over other sources of wealth and employment.—But speaking generally, and not from any positive calculation, a tax upon property in England would bear upon land and houses, as opposed to trades and manufactures, in the proportion of above *seven* to *three;* and in the numbers of actual contributors of above *four* to *two*.—This disproportion marks besides only the pre-eminence of agriculture in the ordinary condition of a nation; but if England were in your exhausted condition, and were called upon for a mighty exertion, you would see how her genius would triumph.—When pressed down with a weight which threatened destruction, her energies would rebound, and raise her as much higher than her former elevation, as difficulties appeared

to

to sink her beneath it.—It is in adversity only, that nations, like individuals, can be estimated; like ships, you can know nothing of them in a harbour; you must try them in the storm, and prove them by the weather that they make.—ENGLAND, I am sure,—(but it is a romance so to speak of her, as in a state she can never be brought to)—ENGLAND would begin by a grand systematic benevolence to the distressed—but her wisdom would inform her that this humane deliverance would be only ruin to her people, if not *immediately* followed up by a system which would enable them to support themselves; and, remembering the efforts she had made for other nations, which were comparatively unburthened, she would regulate all her concerns with them upon a just scale, and by well-considered imposts, until she could cherish all her children in her own bosom, by making her fertile soil repay protected cultivation, neither mocking the husbandman by the ruinous vibrations of markets, nor distressing the poor by prices beyond their reach.—When property was thus

put

put into the true road of returning to its value, neither charities nor bounties would be necessary; proprietors would do the rest for themselves—self-interest is the most spirited reformer; capitals would no longer be wanting, when land was the best of all securities; and, to complete the process, she would brush away the cobwebs of fraudulent money-dealers, the most destructive of all the vermin that infest the earth.—Loans, like all other contracts, should either be the objects of unlimited traffic, or the law that constitutes the exception should be strictly maintained.—When a maximum is established for interest, it ought to be rigorously enforced; differences of risk are shallow subterfuges to support annuities, *except in cases where the borrower has no greater estate than for his own life;* because when he has a *full dominion over his property, and offers it as a security*, the resort to a contingency, *which is forced upon him by the lender* to evade the law that would rescind the contract, and punish the extortion, is a gross and impudent fraud, for

which

which the usurer should forfeit his character and his money.—Whilst this subterfuge is tolerated, proprietors of land must continue to be exposed to the greatest difficulties, and in its present depressed condition a greater relief is wanting than even the abolition of this destructive imposition. Your government, *in some way or other*, should contrive facilities for loans upon estates, until the storm that now desolates them has passed away.

"On the subject of your manufactures I have nothing further to add—their prosperity depends upon the unfettered ingenuity of your matchless people; but you ought to remember that their condition is not the same as when you monopolized the commerce of your world, and that at an enormous expense which leans most heavily upon them, you have set up foreign markets to rival them. The details of this mighty concern is the office of your statesmen, and I trust will be wisely considered. You have

said

said that the improvement of your fisheries had not reached its height.—This is the moment to reach it by the most unremitting exertions.—Neither the sea nor the land can have been enjoyed to the full, whilst your population is under difficulties for support.—There are no doubt with you, as with us, various roots of cheap and easy culture, which though at once prolific and nutritious, are not by themselves inviting to the appetite, nor sufficient for a life of labour, without a mixture of animal food.—In times of distress, therefore, when the plough may fail you, a well ploughed ocean would be a constant refuge.—You can there have no unpropitious seed times, nor uncertain harvests;—tempests could only disperse the reapers for a short season, and the crop would always remain undamaged in a boundless extent.—Even in England the system of supply is far from being perfect; it is brought to an astonishing height for the luxuries of London, yet is still defective in the more momentous department of general and cheap distribution,

tribution; but, depend upon it, *our* legislature will never rest till this great object is accomplished.

"With *you*, I fear, there is a fatal bar to improvement.—Be assured every attempt towards it must be abortive, whilst you keep up your duty upon salt; because the allowances you make to those who are engaged in fisheries, when guarded by the necessary forms to prevent frauds upon so important a revenue, render them of no use whatsoever, and fish can never be made a support for an inland population in their natural state.—Is it not, then, the height of folly to have resort to foreign fisheries at an immense distance, when other nations leave their own coasts and come almost into your harbours, from the superior abundance of your seas?—They take your finest fish—they cure them with your own salt, the best in all your world, which is duty-free when exported; they maintain their people in comfort, whilst your's are everywhere starving, and prosper by a trade

out

out of which you might drive all nations before you, securing your maritime greatness, whilst you increased your internal strength.—In the creeks and harbours of all countries, the smaller fish are always so numerous, that they are used for manure in quantities that almost exceed belief.—Is it certain that with the use of salt they might not be applied also to purposes more useful, and instead of being entirely cast out in large masses to fructify by corruption, be preserved from it by chemical skill, and be devoted to the subsistence of mankind?

"Another momentous subject still more, if possible, demands your attention, and with that I shall conclude.—One of the first sentences you uttered to me, after snatching me from the grave, made an impression upon me which I shall carry there hereafter. You said that this highly-favoured island had been the chosen instrument of Divine dispensation, and that if she deserted or slumbered upon her post, she would

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be relieved and punished—Beware that this penal moment is not at hand.—Why do you now permit despotism and fanaticism to palsy the freedom of the rising world, when your duty and your interest are struggling for precedency to crush them at a blow?—If that vast continent were governed according to the humane maxims of civilized nations, you would have no right to wrest the sceptre out of hands however unworthy to wield it; but since you have been placed for so many ages in the high post of honour for the advancement of human happiness, you ought to suffer no other nation to run on before you in the rescue of suffering millions from famine, dungeons, and the sword.—Recollect your eulogium upon the triumphs of chemistry and mechanics:—apply them to the mines and other productions of those vast regions; not as robbers or task-masters, but in the liberal spirit of commerce with their people, by which you might resuscitate your own country whilst you were breathing new life into theirs."

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The noble minded Morven seemed much pleased and affected, and spoke as follows, but in a voice so subdued as if he almost wished not to be heard:

"There are difficulties in the way of what you propose so warmly.—The project your honest zeal has suggested might kindle a new war throughout our whole world, which might, in the end, be destructive of the happiness and freedom you justly hold so sacred.—There are many desirable objects of policy that are not within our immediate reach, and which we must wait Heaven's own time to see accomplished; but the principle should be consecrated, and the occasion closely watched for its earliest application."

"Not a moment," I answered, "should ever be lost in any thing we have to do, when we are sure we are in the right; there is no time but *the present* for the performance of a practicable moral duty: ENGLAND, in such a cause, would set

set at nought all the nations of the old world if the new one invoked her assistance. Such a great work could not be begun prematurely.— If the sun stood still of old in the camp of the Israelites, it would now rush to the west with increased velocity and lustre, to shine on the British standard, if it stood planted even for a moment in the night.*

"I have now finished all I have to observe upon the condition of your sublime country.— Looking at it with the eager curiosity of a stranger, bred in one which has long been the admiration of its own world, and not wishing to see her in any thing surpassed, yet I am obliged in justice to say, that I consider

* It may be proper here to inform the reader, that when it is six in the morning in Armata, it is midnight in the new world alluded to, because this twin planet with the earth revolves also round its axis from west to east in twenty-four hours; and Armata being eastward of the new world, nearly ninety degrees of longitude, it follows as above-mentioned, that when it is six in the morning in Armata it must be midnight in the new world; every 15 degrees of a great circle of 360 being equal to *an hour of time;* 15 times 24 being 360.

Armata in no respect behind her, except in the state of your finances.—I have not, indeed, been able to trace the smallest defect in any of your institutions, nor in the condition of any of your concerns, that does not come manifestly home to your revenue, which corrupts your government whilst it depresses your people.

" Your energies are still happily undiminished, your industry is unabated, your courage unsubdued, your morals uncorrupted; but you have the same sacrifices, *for a season at least*, to submit to, as an individual may have to make, though with the highest qualifications, if his expenses have gone beyond his estate; and unless you now guard with skill and firmness this *heel of the Achilles*, the result must be fatal.

" Remember always the noble eminence you stand on, and that NO OTHER NATION IS QUALIFIED TO TAKE YOUR PLACE. In the name of God, then, let this awful but animating consideration inspire you—Be firm in your resolves—

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Be patient under temporary privations—Be obedient to your government, and preserve your greatness by the wisdom which made you great."

I now felt myself exhausted in my weak condition, by an exertion to which I fear my readers may have thought, all along, my mind as much as my body was unequal, but my generous protector was satisfied, and as night was coming on, he left me again to my rest.

When Morven came next morning into my apartment, I found myself so much recovered from my fatigue and the bruises I had suffered amongst the rocks, that I told him I was ready to attend him any where, and was full of impatience to see, in all its parts, so noble a country as he had described; particularly its CAPITAL, of which he had as yet said nothing in his general and more important history.

He seemed highly pleased with my proposal,

and said he would send for his son to accompany me, whose youth and modern manners made him a much fitter companion for such an expedition than himself.

The capital, he said, would fill me with admiration and wonder, as the city of SWALOAL was, beyond all question, the greatest, the richest and the most illustrious in that world. I was struck with the *name* as he pronounced it, which he had not mentioned before; and although I well remembered the blunder which, from the habits of association, I had before made in the etymology of Armata, yet I could not help inquiring why this metropolis had obtained so singular an appellation. Morven, in answer, said, that he was himself no etymologist or antiquary, and could only inform me that SWALOAL was a word in the Armatian language, signifying the city long known by that name. I smiled at this *luminous explanation*, saying, it reminded me of an anecdote of our George the Second, who, being a foreigner,

asked

asked one of the lords of his bed-chamber the meaning of the English word *bespatter;* to which his lordship, seemingly much pleased with the easy task imposed upon him, assured the king that he could not have chosen a word whose signification was plainer, or more familiar —" It is just, Sire," he said, " as if YOUR MAJESTY were to *bespatter* ME, or as if I were to *bespatter* YOUR MAJESTY."

Morven now smiled *in his turn;* and I observed to him that nothing was often more unsatisfactory than the derivations of words of all descriptions; though the subject was undoubtedly interesting, and frequently threw great light upon ancient history, but SOMETIMES *no light at all;* as was the case, I thought, with our famous city of London, which could never have had its name from King Lud, though so often supposed; because King Lud reigned before the time that Julius Cæsar was in Britain, who, nevertheless, called it in his Commentaries the city of the Trinobants, which he could not

well have done if it had *so recently* received its name from a prince in the island; Cæsar's first landing being, I believe, in the time of Cassibalaunus, who was brother to Lud, and succeeded him; neither could the city have been called London from Lud's *Town*—town not being a British but a Saxon word; and therefore, if that had been its true derivation, it would have been called *Caer* Lud, and not Lud's Town—But it is still more strange how it should have been called Londinum, by Tacitus, as that was only its *Latin* name after it was called London; an appellation which it never had in the time of the Britons, nor until the Saxon æra, when it received the name of Lund*en*, but with a termination then bestowed upon all well-fenced places, or such as had forts or castles—viz. *Lundenburg* and *Lunden Ceaster*. This name of Lunden was afterwards changed to LONDON, neither of them being at all in honour of King Lud, but adopted by the Saxons from the metropolitan city of Lund*en*, in *Sconeland* or *Sconia*, *then* a place of great traffic in the

the eastern part of Germany. The further, indeed, we trace the connection with King Lud, *the more it will fail us;* as LUDGATE could never be from thence, GATE not being British; and, what is still stronger, *Ludgate* was formerly LEODGATE; LEOD, signifying in Saxon, *folk* or people, and the name of *Leodgate*, therefore, *with all due submission to King Lud*, was given to this great public passage, as the folk's gate or entrance, the *portum populi* in that quarter of the city."

"You quite overpower me with your learning," said Morven; "our great city, like London, has also changed its names and terminations, but as to the reason of those changes, I cannot even hazard a conjecture.—In very ancient times it was styled only SWALO, afterwards SWALOMOR, and in succeeding periods SWALOUP, and SWALODUN, or SWALODOWN; but, for a century at least, it has been universally known by the name of SWALOAL."—I asked here with some impatience, whether those

idem sonans terminations had the significations as in our language, and on his answering *in the negative*, I was still more puzzled.—"None of those terminations," he added, "whether taken by themselves, or used only as adjuncts, have the most distant approach to the meaning which, even adopting your English orthography, we should annex to them, *nor indeed any meanings at all;* but the monosyllables *Out* and *In*, and more so when used in the plural, as in Armata, are two of the most significant words in its whole language, and *Outs* and *Ins* are therefore as opposite as the two poles which distinguish the hemispheres of both our planets." This unexpected conclusion threw me still more wide of *all application to our language or to ourselves.*

Morven now said he had dispatched a messenger for his son, that we might settle the plan of our journey, and in a few hours he arrived in a very handsome carriage, which I shall not describe at present, as it rather belongs

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to my description of the capital hereafter. He was a very handsome young man, highly accomplished, as I understood, according to the fashions of his day, and so full of spirits and life, that he had not been two minutes in the room, nor made any inquiries concerning me, when he seemed most impatient that we should go some where else, saying that the great ships were paying off, and that he would drive me down to the town near which I had been wrecked. I endeavoured to excuse myself, not being yet provided with the dress of the country, nor indeed with any other than that in which I had buffeted the waves and thumped against the rocks; but he would not hear of such an objection.– "Sailors," he said, "went round and round the world, and saw people by turns in all dresses, and whole nations without any dresses at all,—that the admiral was his friend, and would be happy to see us."—He said all this in perfectly good English, which he had learned from his father and grandfather, and seemed so amiable and good natured that I thought it best

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not to refuse him, and we drove off immediately, but not until he had acquainted Morven that we should return to supper, when he hoped we should have music, and that he should set out with me for Swaloal next morning as soon as it was light.

On approaching the port, I observed a great alteration—the stately ships I had seen in full equipment, being now ranged as a kind of hulks for miles together; so that I could not help asking why so grand a fleet had been dismantled, and the answer was a proud one for Armata :

" Because the fleets of our world," he said, " are lying dismantled by their sides—the ocean, which re-echoed through all its caves with the thunder of foreign navies, is now silent as the grave—their cannon are all spiked or upon our battlements, and their flags are the ornaments of our halls :—yonder, (pointing to an immense number at a distance,) yonder are their brave crews, delivered from all their toils."

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When we got into the town, I was surprized to see that by far the greater part of them were hale, robust men, in the highest state of comeliness and health, though most of them had been ten or twelve years at sea, without ever setting foot upon the land, and many of them much longer.—Every one of them had his lass, decked out with a profusion of ribbons of the same colour as in her sailor's hat.—They were full of glee, and full of money, the *whole of which*, I was told, must, according to an immemorial and inexorable custom, be spent among the ladies *in one day*, and indeed they seemed most alert in observing it, as they were parading the streets with music, and shops and places of entertainment of every description gaped wide open to receive them.—I was invited to dine with their officers, where I met the most pleasant men I had ever conversed with.—The table was not quite large enough for us all, but they would hear of no difficulties, and as some of them had left an arm or a leg behind them, we were able (to use a seaman's phrase) to stow the closer.—They had

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all of them the same frank, gentleman-like manners, which distinguish our most accomplished countrymen; but there was something, at the same time, in their aspect, which gave me an idea of how unmoved they must have stood amidst unexampled difficulties and dangers.—Wishing that nothing in such noble beings should be imperfect, I said to their commander, " Why don't you some how or other contrive to improve the manners and conduct of your seamen, who are now filling your streets with noise and confusion amidst their women?" " You might as well ask me," answered this great officer, " why God has not made an elephant like an ape; or why he has fashioned all things to fill their allotted stations.—Our sailor of Armata is an animal non-descript, and must *in nothing be changed or touched.*—I am no politician.—You may reform parliament for any thing I care, but don't attempt to reform *our sailor*.—The love of woman is his distinguishing feature, he lavishes every thing upon her, and returns to sea when his money is spent; with-

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out this passion, even in its excess, our ships would be receptacles of abomination and horror.—The sexes are the elements of the world; there is male and female in every tree and plant down to the grass we tread upon; and you might as well complain, that their farinas mixed with one another in the upland country, as condemn the transient amours of our seamen upon the shore. I respect as much as any man the sanctities of marriage, and acknowledge its usefulness in the social world; but you must not think of contending too roughly with the ancient characteristics of mankind.—You may scour an old coin to make it legible; but if you go on scouring, it will be *no coin at all.*"

"I could only say in reply to all this, that I was the last man in the world to object to the admiration of women, and that what he had said of its usefulness to the inhabitants of ships was quite unanswerable; but that no human beings could go beyond our English sailors, who nevertheless were most sedate and considerate, generally

generally married, and remarkable for the parsimonious care of their money, most of them keeping regular accounts with some banker or slop-seller whilst they were at sea."—"If that be so," said Morven, "*Your* sailors could never fight like *ours*."—I took fire at this, (the only excuse perhaps for what follows)—"A British sailor," I replied, (trembling with indignation,) "a British sailor, Sir, would fight with the devil, and in the service of his country would enter hell itself to seek him out."—The admiral, whose jealous feelings did not extend to another world, shook hands with me most heartily, and after a few more bottles, I took my leave.

My young companion at the same time called for his carriage, and we set out by moon-light on our return. As we went along, he asked me, "how I had— * * * *
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I cannot describe my mortification at being here obliged to acquaint my readers that the printer has this moment returned to me all the remaining part of my narrative, immediately following what is above printed, being about four hundred pages in my closest manner of writing, saying it was so obliterated by the sea-water in my shipwreck homewards, as not to be at all legible. I must now therefore abruptly, and most unwillingly, close my publication, at least for the present; earnestly entreating the indulgence of the public to refer to the Postscript for a fuller explanation of my situation, and of the extreme difficulty I cannot but feel in submitting to them what is now published in so unsatisfactory and mutilated a state.



POSTSCRIPT.

I HAVE felt great difficulty in consenting to publish, *at present,* what is now offered to the world.—I was aware that, after having described in all its details so extraordinary a passage to an unknown world, it could not but give an air of fable to the whole of it, to be seen sallying forth from Mr. Murray's in Albemarle-street, without a single word having been said of the means by which I got back again to the earth. The scale was however turned in favour of immediate publication.—The loss of my manuscript, when I was shipwrecked in Ireland on my homeward voyage, was *irretrievable,* and I had no choice left after my return to England, but to publish *at once* what remained of it, or to let curiosity languish, or perhaps be considered as an impostor.—There was another inducement to pursue this course.—If the public shall take no interest in the part now before it, the other

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had far better be suppressed; and, on the other hand, if it should be called for by those who have read the first, it will give fresh spirit to a composition which must now be extremely difficult.

If I could have saved the rest of my manuscript amongst the breakers, which I should have done, if, like the part preserved, it had been inclosed in leather, I should have trusted without fear to my materials, and to the interest they could not but have created when viewed altogether; and even amidst all the obstacles I have to contend with, from the part published being only a dull narrative, interspersed with no amusing incidents, I feel some confidence that my work will derive sufficient support from what may be expected in its *sequel.*—An account of the great city of SWALOAL cannot but excite the curiosity of LONDON.

FINIS.

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